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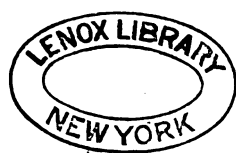
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HOOD'S MAGAZINE

AND

Comic Miscellany.

OUR FAMILY:

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER V.

A DILEMMA.

THE sun was high in heaven, ere my father awoke the next morning, roused from his Elysian dreams by the swallows which first twittered at the eaves above the window, and then, after wheeling round the gable, went skimming along the surface of the glittering river in front of the house; contriving, temperate creatures though they be, to *moisten their clay* in the passage. The good Doctor sprang from his bed, threw open his casement, and looking cheerfully out into the fresh bright air, began whistling, in his old quiet way, the White Cockade. In the language of the professional bulletins, he had passed a good night: whereas my mother's had been a bad one. On paying his morning visit, he found her weak and languid: her face faded to a dull white, that, with its solid settled gravity, reminded him of cold suet dumpling.

"Your mistress seems poorly this morning," said my father, addressing himself to Mrs. Prideaux, who had just entered the bedroom, dressed in a morning costume of peculiar neatness.

"I have certainly had the pleasure of seeing your lady look better," answered the nurse, "but she has been watchful, and giving way to mental solicitude."

"Solicitude!—about what?"

"It's about the christening," said my mother, with a sigh of exhaustion. "I have hardly slept a wink all night for thinking of it—and cannot yet make up my mind."

"As to what?"

"Why, whether we should have two godfathers, or four."

"Four godfathers!"

"Yes—four," said my mother. "Kezia says, as there are twins to baptize, there must be a double set of sponsors. And certainly, according to the Book of Common Prayer, she is right. Here it is—" and she pulled the authority from under her pillow — "The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants, to be used in the Church. *And note, that there shall be for every male child to be baptized two godfathers and one godmother.*"

"Humph!" said my father. "The rule seems plain enough. But will not the same pair of sponsors serve over again for the second child?"

"That is the very point," said my mother. "I have been turning it over and over, all night long, till my poor head is in a whirl with it; but am none the nearer. What is your own impression about it?"

"The duties of a godfather are rather serious," said my father, "and if duly fulfilled would be somewhat onerous. But, as they are commonly performed, or rather compounded for, by some trifling gift, a spoon, a mug, or a coral —"

"And some godfathers," exclaimed my mother, "neglect even that! There was old Mackworth, who stood for little Tomkins, and rich as he is, never gave his godson so much as a salt spoon!"

"Such being the case," said my father, putting on his gravest face, "I really think that a couple of able bodied men might stand sponsors, not merely for two babies, but for a whole regiment of infantry."

"It depends on the canons," said my mother, unconsciously supplying the infantry of my father's equivoque with appropriate artillery.

"On the what?"

"On the canons of the church," said my mother; "and I do wish that in your rounds you would look in on the Curate and obtain his dictum on the subject."

"Perhaps Mrs. Prideaux can enlighten us," said my father, turning towards that ladylike personage, who was hushing my brother on her lap, with a lullaby refined enough to have been of her own composition.

"No, I have asked Mrs. Prideaux," interposed my mother; "but she has never nursed twins before, she says, and therefore cannot furnish a precedent."

"And if the Curate has never baptized twins before," said my father, "he will be in the same predicament."

"Of course he will," said my mother, looking as blank as if the clergyman in question had already declared himself at the supposed nonplus. "I'm quite troubled about it, and have been sleepless all night. It would break my heart to find hereafter that the dear infants

had only been half Christianized through any departure from the orthodox rules."

"I'll tell you what," said my father, starting up from a brief reverie, during which he had assumed his usual air and attitude, at the consideration of an intricate case. "I'll ask Postle."

"Kezia has asked him," said my mother.

"Well?"

"Why, he said that two godfathers are the proper dose for a male child, but whether it ought to be repeated for twins, was more than he could say, and advised a consulting clergyman to be called in."

"Precisely so—it is a clerical case."

"For my part," continued my mother, "I am at my wit's ends about it; for four sponsors, if there must be four, are not to be looked up in a hurry —"

"There's no need of four," exclaimed a voice, and in another moment the face of Kezia became visible between the foot-curtains of the bed, her claret-mark mulled by heat and haste to a rich purple, and the other cheek vying with it in colour through triumph and excitement. "There's no need for four! Two godfathers will be enough for both twins; here it is under the Church's own hand;" and she held out an open letter to her mistress.

That invaluable Kezia! At the first hint of the dilemma, from my mother — having previously teased, and tried to unpick the difficulty, in her own mind, she had carried it down stairs, to where all mysteries and doubts were taken for analysis and solution — the surgery. But Mr. Postle, as already stated, was unable to decide the question. In this extremity, it occurred to her that there was a certain channel, through which she might obtain the requisite information: one Mrs. Yardly, whose husband, the parish clerk, would be as competent an authority as to the baptismal ceremonial as the curate himself. The acquaintance, it was true, was a very slight one: but where the good of the family was concerned, the faithful maid of all work was accustomed to get over far more formidable fences. Accordingly she at once composed and dispatched a missive, of which the following is a correct copy, to the Amen Corner of our village.

"Dear Maddam

"Hopping you will xcuse the Libberty from allmost a purfect Strainger havin but wunce xchanged speach with you in the Surgary, about a Pot of Lennitive Electricity. But our hole Fammily being uncommon anxous respectin the Cristnin of Hinfants. About witch we are all in a Parradox thro havin Twinns. The sweatest, finest thrivingest littel Cherrube you ever saw. As lick as too pees And a purfect plesure to nus only rayther hoarse and roopy with singin dubblikit lullabis and so much Cradle Him. Not to menshun a xtra sett of Babby linnin to be made at a short notis for the Supper nummery And all the hous-old wurk besides. But its unpossible to help slavin wuns self to Deth for such a pare of dear luvable littel hinnocents, and I allmost wish I was ded to be a Gardian Angle for their sacks being purfectly miserable wen I think wat Croops and Convulshuns and Blites beset such yung toothless Buds. And half crazy besides with divided oppinions between Small Pock and Cow Pock witch by report runs sum times into horns and Hoofs. Lord preserve the dear littel Soles from such a trans moggrificashun. But lettin alone Waxynation our present hobject bein to make them Hares of Grace. And as such how menny must stand

Sponserers for them at the Fount? The Prayer Book says two god fathers for evvery Mail but the Pint is wether the same two cannot anser or not for boath. As yet only two have been providid namely their unkel Mr. Rumbold the Dry Salter and a Mister Sumboddy, a Proxy in Docters Commons. So that if so be Fore Fathers is necessary for Twinns we shall be at a Non Plush. The nus Mrs. Priddo never havin nust Twinns afore cant find a President. And Mister Postle say it is out of his line of practia. But yure Husbund Mister Y bein a elisiasticle Caracter of course knows wat is propper and ortherdoxical and an erly Line from ether him or you to that effect would grately obleege and releave all our minds. For as you may suppose we are anxious for the dear Hinfants to have a reglar Babe teasing. And shud be shockt arterwards to find they had been skrimpt in their Spirritual rites. Witch is a matter in witch wun would prefer their Babbies to be rayther over then under dun. Bless, bless, their preshus littel harts. With witch I remane dear Maddam

"Yours &c.

"KEZIA JENES."

The answer to this epistle had just arrived; and after a hasty perusal by Kezia, was thrust open into her mistress's hand.

"Here, take it George," said my mother, "and read it aloud."

My father took the document, and began to read, — the owner of the letter lending her ears as intently, as if she learned the sense of the writing for the first time.

"Madam,

"In reply to your epistolary favour to my Wife beg to say you are quite wellcome gratis to any experience or information in my Power, parochial, ecclesiastical, or scholastic — Copies of Births, Deaths, or Marriage Certificates excepted, and searching the Register, which is charged for according to time and trouble.

"As regards the Sacrament of Baptism, the quotation from the Prayer Book, is ceremoniously correct. Whereby, according to Rule of Three, if one Male Infant require two Godfathers how many will two require? Answer, Four. But in Practise two are religiously sufficient for twin juveniles. Our fees in any case being the same. Not that the Church object to the full sponsorial complement if parental parties think proper to indulge in the same; whether for the sake of a greater Shew, or with a view to the multiplication of customary Presents. Exempli Gratia, Mrs. Fordige with the extraordinary number of Four Twin Sons at a Birth, who were named after the Holy Evangelists, videlicet, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, when it was thought proper to have the full number of Godfathers, $4 \times 2 = 8$, and which I well remember walking up the aisle two and two, with Nosegays, like the team of a Stage Waggon. As was considered an interesting spectacle, especially by the Female part of the congregation. And profitable, besides, to parents, the eight Godfathers having agreed amongst themselves, and the four Godmothers likewise — Sum Total, twelve — to present Plate of the same pattern.

"In conclusion, my matrimonial Partner desires her compliments, & trusts to be excused answering the domestic details in your Letter for the present, hoping shortly to enjoy the pleasure of a Call, and to enter into the dear little innocents in person.

"I am, Madam,

"Your very humble Servant,

"REUBEN YARDLEY, P. C."

"There!" said my father, returning the letter to Kezia; and then gaily addressing my mother, "Our perplexities are at an end! We may drive our christening coach with a pair of godfathers, or four in hand, at our own option. For which do you vote?"

"O, for only a pair, of course," replied my mother. "The four

would be so hard to collect," she added in a tone which showed that she lamented the difficulty. She was proud of her twins, and would have liked to have seen them attended up the church aisle by a double set of sponsors, walking two and two, with nosegays, and forming, as the learned clerk said, an interesting spectacle to the female spectators. For a minute or so, closing her eyes, she had even enjoyed, in a day-dream, a sort of rehearsal of such a procession: but there were too many obstacles in the way of its realisation; and she reluctantly gave up the scheme.

"That's settled, then!" exclaimed my father, rubbing his hands together in a most high and palmy state of satisfaction.

"Not quite," said my other parent; who from stewing had only subsided into a simmering. "There's the godmother. I have gone through every female name in the place, without hitting on any body likely to undertake the office."

"Phoo, phoo, it's a mere form."

"I beg your pardon," said my mother rather hastily. "Some persons think it a very responsible office, and refuse to be godmothers at all on that account. Others, again, profess a deep sense of its duties, and insist on acting up to the character."

"And is there any harm in that?" asked my father.

"There might be a world of trouble and annoyance in it," said my mother. "There's Mrs. Pritchard, whom I sounded on the subject, when she called yesterday. 'I'm agreeable to stand,' said she, 'if I'm asked, but, mind, I shall stand on conscientious grounds. I'm not going to be a nominal godmother, like some people:—not a mere automaton, or a figure in wax-work. If I become one of their religious sureties, I'll act up to it, and do my duty as regards their spiritual bringing up, which is all very well, but might be made a pretext, you know, for interfering in the children's education, and every-thing.'"

"No doubt of it," said my father. "And from the perseverance with which Mrs. Pritchard meddles in the temporal concerns of her neighbours, she would unquestionably be a rank nuisance where she had any pretence for busying herself with their spiritual ones. But there's Mrs. Hewley."

"She's in favour of Adult Baptism," replied my mother.

"Or Mrs. Trent?"

"She's for total immersion, or dipping in running streams."

"Mrs. Cobley, then?"

"Why, she's a Papist!"

Poor Kezia! Her variegated York and Lancaster face had undergone, during the discussion, a dozen changes—from red and white to all red, and then back again,—her lips twitching, her brows knitting, her eyes twinkling and moistening. What would she not have given to have been in a station that would have entitled her to volunteer the god-mothering of those evangelical twin babes—to have undertaken the care of their precious little souls, as well as of their dear little bodies!—to have stood for them at the font, as well as at the fire, the dresser, the tub, and the ironing-board—slaving for their spiritual welfare as well as their temporal comfort! How heartily she

would have pledged herself to teach them the Creed and the Commandments, and the Catechism, in the vulgar tongue, and "all that a Christian ought to know," if she learned some branches of education herself for the purpose! But she had, alas! no chance of enjoying such drudgery.

"There's Mrs. Spencer," suggested my father.

"She's confined," said my mother.

"Well, well," said my father, smiling, "if it comes to the worst, there's the pew-opener."

"The Lord forbid!" exclaimed Kezia, lifting up her hands and her eyes at the proposition. "What, Mrs. Pegge! Why she stands for all the naturalized children in the parish."

"As mine are, I hope," said my father, with due gravity.

Kezia turned indignantly away: she felt sure that her master must be joking, but the subject was too serious for such treatment. What, —those beautiful twin babes—both in one cradle—both on one pillow—both under one blanket! "Bless them," she ejaculated aloud, "bless them, bless them, the dear little cherubims—I've boil'd their tops and bottoms!"

The last announcement was aimed at the nurse, but it evidently hit my father also, and in some ticklesome place, for he rubbed his nose as smartly as if a fly had settled on it, and then setting up his whisper of a whistle, stepped briskly out of the bedchamber and down the stairs into the surgery. Why he stopped his music, to laugh out at about the middle of the flight, was known only to himself.



"A GREAT FACT."

THE DECEPTION.

A TALE OF REAL LIFE.

It was on a bright sunshiny day in the month of August, 183—, that a travelling chariot with four post-horses was seen rapidly descending a steep hill in the environs of Bordeaux. One glance at the handsome equipage would remove all doubt of its being English, although the appearance of its sole occupant showed few of those characteristics that distinguish our countrymen. He was a young man of about nine-and-twenty, tall and well made; but the colour of his eyes, of the deepest blue, scarcely accorded with the dark complexion and jet-black hair that seemed to proclaim him of Eastern rather than of European origin. His neatly-trimmed moustache, setting off a handsome mouth, and teeth of feminine delicacy and whiteness, added to his foreign appearance, which was further increased by the addition of sundry rings and chains, not exactly in keeping with the simplicity that usually marks the well-dressed Englishman.

The traveller was Sir Caversham Harley—one of those spoiled children of fortune who, after wasting time and risking health in the pursuit of every frivolous enjoyment, wander at last from country to country in the hope of thus curing their half-imaginary maladies. Such had been the errand that had taken Sir Caversham to the baths in the Pyrenees, from whence he was now returning.

Supported on every kind of cushion that the luxury of modern times has invented, the carriage half filled with guide-books and maps, he reclined in one corner; and though the amber mouth-piece of his Turkish pipe rested between his lips, he seemed almost too listless to smoke.

Suddenly the annoyance of a cloud of dust, raised by a britzka which had for some time been in advance of his carriage, roused him from his lethargy, and he desired the postilion to quicken his pace. The remonstrances of his courier—that by the laws of French posting no carriage was allowed to pass another—were disregarded, as he angrily repeated the command; and stimulated by the promise of a handsome reward, whip and spur were used with such effect that they soon overtook the other travellers. A few oaths were exchanged between the postilions as the two vehicles dashed forward at a furious pace; when suddenly, the wheel of the stronger carriage coming in contact with that of the light britzka, the latter was upset. A piercing shriek awakened the young Baronet to a sense of his imprudence; and lowering the window, he endeavoured to arrest the progress of his own horses:

but it was not till they had reached the bottom of the hill that the postilion succeeded in checking them.

Sir Caversham, alighting, now hurried to the spot where the other carriage lay. Reclining against the bank at the side of the road he saw a young and very pretty woman. Her hat was thrown off, and the drops of blood that trickled down her forehead showed she had not escaped unhurt in the encounter. A passionate admirer of the fair sex, the interest he would at all times have felt in so lovely a person was increased by remorse for his own obstinate folly. Thoroughly ashamed of himself, though pretending to throw the blame on his own servants, he began to aid an elderly lady who was employed in bathing the wound of the sufferer. Fortunately it proved but slight; and when the fair travellers had recovered from their alarm, and had leisure to observe the handsome person and elegant address of the stranger, his excuses were readily received, the offer of seats in his own carriage accepted, and they proceeded together towards Bordeaux.

The conversation became extremely animated; and to our hero, already half in love, the remainder of the journey seemed only too short. He did not quit his new acquaintance till he had discovered that the younger lady was Spanish, the widow of a French officer, whose chateau was situated near Bordeaux, and related to a family with whom he had been on intimate terms at Madrid. Dolores de Castillan was formed to win a heart less susceptible than that of her new adorer. She possessed beauty, but the grace of her manners and the vivacity of her conversation left her mere personal attractions far behind; and Sir Caversham, who in the course of his life had been desperately enamoured fifty times at least, now felt, or fancied, that he had never really loved before. His departure from Bordeaux was delayed, while days and weeks passed rapidly away in the society of the lovely widow. She could not be blind to her conquest, but admiration to her was so little of a novelty that it would probably have made but slight impression, had not she been equally fascinated by the person and manners of the young Englishman. The heart of Dolores, however, was cast in a very different mould from that of her admirer. Though a widow of twenty, she had never yet experienced the passion of love; and without possessing one of those ardent temperaments, ready to catch fire at the addresses of every handsome or agreeable man, she was capable of a deep and lasting passion. Unfortunately, though agreeing so well in their feelings towards each other, there were serious obstacles to a marriage between them. Dolores was a rigid Catholic, and looked on a union with one of a different faith as little less than a crime. Nor was this the only reason that rendered a nearer connection with the Baronet undesirable. Her aunt, the lady who accompanied her when they first met, was anxious she should marry her only son. Rafael Gonzales was handsome, intelligent, and agreeable, not many years older than Dolores herself, and with no remarkable defect except perhaps a superabundance of that fiery temper that has been held characteristic of his nation. From boyhood he had loved his cousin; and when political events forced her father to leave Spain and settle in France, neither time, nor distance, nor even the intelli-

gence of her marriage, could change his feelings towards her. Dolores was aware of her aunt's wishes, and, as she had married one husband to please her father, was not disinclined to accept a second at the recommendation of her nearest remaining relative; but, resolved not to pledge herself too hastily, she had as yet given Don Rafael no encouragement that could authorise a formal proposal.

Nor had Sir Caversham less powerful reasons against entangling himself in a serious engagement; for, having greatly injured his fortune by his extravagance, he was now returning to England with a half-defined idea of making some marriage that should enable him to get rid of several heavy encumbrances on his estate.

While the lovers, for such they were, though as yet unacknowledged, thought only of each other, sharp-sighted jealousy had already shown Gonzales the approaching destruction of his long-cherished hopes. Pride, however, and the consciousness that he had no right to reproach his cousin for the disappointment of hopes she had never given, enabled him to subdue his feelings, till the sight of his rival became so hateful to him that, under pretence of a visit to a friend, he quitted Bordeaux.

Not long after his departure Sir Caversham, urged by a pressing letter, began to feel the necessity of leaving also; and he dropped some words of his intention to Dolores. She made no answer; but the extreme paleness of her countenance alarmed and touched him. His was not an uncommon character: it united great weakness of resolution with violent passions. We have already said that in the handsome person of the Baronet there were contrasts that left it doubtful whether he was of European origin. In fact he had Eastern blood in his veins; and Europe and Asia were even less blended in his appearance than in his character. His mother was a beautiful Circassian, whom his father, travelling in those countries, in a fit of romantic enthusiasm, converted to Christianity, and married; and from her he inherited the warm temperament that belongs to the people of her country. From the same source he took a certain inconstancy and indifference for the object once gained, that often accompanies ardent tempers. But these very defects, if they rendered him less estimable, gave a warmth and earnestness to his manner, when anxious to please, that made him irresistible. The silent grief of Dolores pained him to the heart. "My own Dolores," said he, taking her hand, "this parting will be but temporary. Can my sweet angel think I will suffer anything to keep me long from her?"

"Not so," returned she, struggling to speak calmly. "It is better that we part at once. I always knew it must be so, but, self-indulging, I have shut my eyes to the gulf before me. But go now, ere it be too late to forget the time we have passed together. It is far better that we meet no more."

"Nay, dearest," answered he, drawing her towards him, "why should we inflict such sorrow on ourselves? I could not live without the hope of seeing my Dolores again!"

"To what purpose?" she returned. "We can never be more to each other than we are at present; and to meet again would only renew the

pain we now feel. No, Caversham, return no more. It would be cruel to allow it. Alas," continued she, shedding tears, "whatever I suffer myself, I will not bring disappointment and sorrow on you."

Her words roused the curiosity of the young Baronet ; they seemed to imply that an obstacle to their future intercourse existed on *her* side. This had never entered his head. He urged an explanation, and found that, far from being ready to accept his hand, she would regard a marriage between them as a sin, on her part, of the deepest dye.

The inconsistency of human nature may explain why, when Sir Caversham found the good unattainable that hitherto he had scarcely desired, he should be disposed to make any sacrifice rather than resign it. The whole ardour of his character was roused. He found that his passion had reached a height unsuspected by himself; and there was nothing he was not ready to promise, or do, rather than lose her. But duty, or what she fancied such, long gave her firmness to resist his persuasions. Sir Caversham became seriously unhappy. He was endowed with a large share of that showy sensibility which vents itself in tears and all the outward appearance of grief; and he said, and firmly believed, that his health was sinking in the contest. Was it wonderful that Dolores, whose heart spoke only too powerfully in his favour, at last consented to bestow her hand on him.

The Baronet had little time to indulge in the transports of joy and gratitude he really felt. His stay at Bordeaux had already been much longer than he intended, and after a day or two given to perfect bliss he set off with all possible speed for London.

He was received by his cousin with every mark of satisfaction. "Well, Cav," said he, shaking him heartily by the hand, "thank Heaven! I have you out of the clutches of these French women at last. Ah! don't shake your head! you will never persuade me it was not a pretty girl that has been keeping you all this while at Bordeaux. But never mind, it is over now, and you are safe. You must marry, my dear fellow: there is no help for it. It is time to sow your wild oats. You must become a '*père de famille*,' and then, you know, you can put your estate and your children to nurse at the same time. Ha, ha, ha! and upon my life, old boy, the former requires it, for it is in a very sickly state. But you shall marry a girl with forty thousand pounds, and that will set all right again."

Sir Caversham, who had returned to London with his heart full of Dolores and his head of romance, was considerably annoyed by the rough attack of this plain country gentleman. He was too much disgusted even to ask the name of the fair one who had been fixed on to make him happy; but the other, whose brain was quite as much occupied with his project as the Baronet with his love, continued:

"And who do you think is the lady? No other than Julia Stanley, whom you danced with all night at the race-ball two years ago, and flirted with a whole week after: I remember your saying it was a pity she had no fortune. Well, since that time Old Stanley has lost two or three children by measles, or something; and a month ago her brother was upset in a boat and drowned; so Julia comes into forty thousand now, and a pretty addition at her father's death. A whole

family removed to make room for you! Eh! you dog! I assure you Julia is handsomer than ever: all the county is in commotion about her."

It would be difficult to describe the indignation of this zealous friend when Sir Caversham at last confessed that he was already engaged, and to a person whose fortune was far too moderate to be of any assistance in the embarrassed state of his own. He spared no argument to induce him to retract his foolish promise; urging, that without a considerable supply of ready money his property would be seriously injured. Not content with this, he summoned to his aid one of the most reckless and dissipated of Sir Caversham's former friends—a man against whom he had himself warned him twenty times, but who he knew to have great influence over the facile mind of the Baronet; and certainly, if argument or raillery could have prevailed, his advisers would have had their own way. They succeeded so far as to make him allow, that were the thing still to do, it would not be done; but he was in no humour to concede one jot more, for he had just received the first letter from Dolores.

"Well, what success?" asked the country gentleman, meeting the guardsman who had just quitted the Baronet.

"I begin to despair," was the answer; "but I will not give it up yet. I have a plan to get him among a few of ours;—a little dissipation used to turn his brain. Well, good bye. You must not give him any of your wise counsel against my society just at present, you know."

Leaving Sir Caversham safe in London, we must carry our readers to Bordeaux, where for two months the fair Spaniard had now been impatiently awaiting letters to announce his speedy arrival. His departure had been the signal for Gonzales to return to the chateau, but no longer with the hopes that formerly led him there. The engagement of his cousin to the handsome Englishman was generally known; and his purpose was to take his mother back to their native country: but Dolores, depressed by the protracted absence of her lover, and suffering from a superstitious fear that she had acted wrongly in engaging herself to him, was so much in need of her aunt's society that the latter still delayed her departure. At length a new anxiety arose to torment her. The letters of Sir Caversham became less frequent,—till, sick with hope deferred, she began to fancy it was ordained they should never meet again. An unusually long interval had passed without any news of the Baronet, when the following letter was received by Donna Marianna:—

"Madam,

"It is with great pain I write to acquaint you with the death of my lamented friend, Sir Caversham Harley. Knowing the attachment that existed between your niece, Madame de Castillau, and him, I beg you to communicate this distressing intelligence to her.

"Our poor friend had made every arrangement to rejoin you at Bordeaux, when the day before that fixed on for his journey he was thrown from his horse, and so severely hurt as to survive but a few hours. With his latest breath he requested me to send his last farewell to his Dolores.

"I cannot, Madam, pursue this melancholy subject. I am myself overwhelmed

with grief at the loss of the companion of many years,—the best and noblest of friends.

"That your niece may find consolation in this heavy affliction is the sincere wish of,

"Madam,
"Your humble and devoted servant,
"JOHN HARDISTY."

Words are inadequate to describe the grief of Dolores when she found her worst anticipations thus fulfilled. To follow her lamented lover to the grave was her daily, hourly petition to Heaven. Her delicate constitution was unable to resist such excessive sorrow, and an illness followed during which fears were long entertained for her life. At length she recovered, but it was with weakened energies and a mind crushed beneath the blow. In this state her aunt and cousin resolved to try the effect of change; and in the hope that new scenes might be of benefit to her, it was decided they should visit the baths of Germany.

Even a person accustomed to the splendid scenery of Spain may view that of the Rhine with admiration: and her friends, seeing that she began to take an interest in surrounding objects, dared to indulge hopes of her ultimate recovery.

Their progress had been necessarily slow, and on reaching Manheim a short delay was thought advisable. She was a daily visitor of the beautiful gardens of that town, and under the shade of some old tree often passed hours in thought. Throughout the journey the beauty of Dolores had attracted universal admiration,—indeed, suffering had given it an almost angelical expression. The oval contour of her countenance, which, though the bloom had now left it, the rich hue of a southern complexion preserved from the appearance of paleness, the large eyes, no longer bright but Madonna-like in their expression of sorrow, the long sable lashes that fringed them—never had she been more interestingly lovely; but the notice thus drawn on her became so painful, that to avoid it she generally sought a sequestered part of the gardens.

One day that she had taken her usual seat under a wide-spreading chesnut, a lady, who was walking in an allée not far distant, caught a glimpse of the party. Turning towards the gentleman who accompanied her, "Let us cross to the walk opposite," said she; "we shall see the beautiful foreigner that every one is talking of. Even since our arrival last night Walters has found time to hear a great deal about her. She showed me her brother in the corridor this morning, and I am sure it was he I saw a moment ago standing by that seat. His sister is probably there."

Stealing round a clump of trees, the speaker hurried her husband along a walk in the shrubbery that brought them in front of the bench where she expected to find the strangers. She had hitherto been so in advance of her companion as to intercept his view; but when immediately before them, not the fabled glance of the basilisk could have had a more instantaneous or startling effect than had the sight of Dolores on that man. He stood as if petrified, while she, starting

from her seat and gasping for breath, exclaimed, "Caversham, Caversham returned from the grave! My beloved! speak to me."

It would be difficult to say which of the party was the most astonished at this unexpected recognition. Gonzales, who for a moment supposed that the strong resemblance of some stranger to her deceased lover had deceived his cousin, was soon convinced that the Baronet himself stood before him. The lady, whose curiosity had brought about this meeting, after gazing at them for a moment in the utmost perplexity, said, "Here is some mistake, madam: this gentleman, Sir Caversham Harley, is my husband."

Quick as lightning the conviction now flashed on Gonzales' mind that the feelings of Dolores had been shamefully trifled with; and as she, who scarcely understood the sense of what she heard, stood grasping the arm of Sir Caversham, with her eyes wildly fixed on his face, he said,

"Your husband! madam. May I ask how long you have been married to this——gentleman?"

"About two months, sir," returned she, haughtily; for there was a contempt in the tone of the question that offended her. Her reply was sufficient.

"Dolores, my sweet cousin!" said he, trying to draw her away, "leave that man. He has basely, cruelly deceived you. The tale of his death was a lie, forged to release him from an engagement of which he was unworthy. Dearest! unclasp your hand from his arm."

Dolores gazed around her like one stupified, and seemed scarce to hear the words addressed to her, but their sense pierced her very brain.

It was in vain that Sir Caversham, unable to utter a syllable, attempted to withdraw from the spot. Without rudely shaking her off, he could not free himself from the grasp of her hand, and he remained the very picture of shame and confusion, while Gonzales thus stigmatised his conduct. Dolores, however, understood only too well the purport of her cousin's words, and taking from her bosom the letter in which Captain Hardisty had announced his friend's death, she held it to the lady.

"Take it, madam," said she; "it will explain all. It should have gone with me to the grave; but now"—she cast one look on her lover, then clasping her hands, exclaimed, "Merciful God! for him did I forget thee, and through him I am punished! Mocked—deceived—my heart broken. Grant that my sufferings may atone for my sin." She sank into her cousin's arms; and while he bore her to a seat, and endeavoured to restore her, the Baronet and his bride left the gardens.

It will be necessary to account for the strange re-appearance of our hero on the scene; and to do this we must return to the time at which we left him in London. It certainly was a master-stroke of his friend Hardisty to rely on the aid of dissipation for overcoming the better resolutions of his pupil. We have hitherto exhibited Sir Caversham in his best light. As a frequenter of the gaming-table, a votary of every fashionable vice, it has not entered into our plan to show him;

yet these were the pursuits in which he had passed his life and ruined his fortune. Not the least of the evils resulting from his excesses was his extreme selfishness, which, being the moving spring of his whole existence, made him, after a few weeks spent in the society of his old companions, think of his engagement to Dolores as a folly into which his good nature and proneness to admire a pretty woman had led him. To add to his regrets, Miss Stanley was, in London, the object of general admiration for her beauty, and doubly attractive by her fortune. It was painful to his vanity that a girl, who, two years before, thought herself lucky in getting him for a partner in the dance, could now command the serious attentions of men superior in rank and fortune to himself; and in attempting to vie with these rivals he found himself, at the end of a few weeks' flirtation, seriously compromised with the lady and her family.

While thus entangled with two women, and his fortune more involved than ever, an accident occurred that had nearly brought his career to an untimely end. He was thrown from his horse in riding a steeple-chase, and received some serious fractures. A few evenings afterwards Captain Hardisty, while sitting by his bed-side, turned the conversation on his engagement, pretending some surprise that it was not already broken off. "For heaven's sake, Harley," said he, "act like a man of sense. You no longer want to marry this Spanish flame of yours; and if you did, I suspect you have gone much too far with Julia Stanley to get off decently." "I am in a desperate scrape there, to be sure," murmured the invalid. "I confess I should not be sorry to get rid of this other affair, but I don't see what excuse I can make to my Spanish flame, as you call her." "Send word you are dead, my good fellow," was the answer. "And now I think of it, this spill of your's — it was a devilish near thing: if you had been killed, I suppose it would have fallen to my lot to make the proper excuses to the lady. Why should not I do it now? It is but saying you broke your neck instead of your ribs. By heaven! an excellent plot; and here comes St. Aubin, and half a dozen more, to give their opinion of it."

Several of the set now entered, ready to approve of any plan that should get their companion out of his dilemma, and especially delighted with this one, as an excellent joke.

"After all," said the Baronet, "it would only be anticipating things a little. Agitation of any sort is strictly forbidden me. I see Forbes cannot keep his eye from the dice-box; and I know he is going to propose a touch at chicken-hazard. Now, what with noise and losing —"

"Gad, that is very true," interrupted St. Aubin. "Here's Cav desired to keep quiet for his life: play will excite him of course, and he will most likely be carried off by a fever in a few days. What does it signify, whether Hardisty lets the people at Bordeaux know his death to day or a week hence? it will come to just the same thing!"

This idea was hailed with loud applause. It had not ceased when Hardisty left the room. He soon returned.

"It is done," said he. "Harley, you are a free man. I have made a magnificent eulogium on you; and, upon my soul, the whole letter was so affecting, I nearly shed tears over it myself. And now hurrah! and bumpers round (mind, Cav, *you* don't touch a drop) to the health of Julia Stanley."

With this explanation we must once more return to Dolores. Unable to sustain the shock she had received, she was conveyed to the hotel in a state that renewed the alarm of her friends. The intervals of consciousness were passed in thanking her cousin for his untiring kindness, and imploring his pardon that for one so worthless she had slighted his honest affection. Thus passed the first weary night; and as, early next morning, Gonzales left her apartment for his own, he saw the carriage that conveyed Sir Caversham and Lady Harley to Baden drive from the hotel.

Sir Caversham had thought it probable that Gonzales might have claimed satisfaction of him; and though he would not, by staying at Manheim, seem to brave the resentment of the offended family, he took care it should be no secret that Baden was the place of his destination. Week, however, followed week after his arrival there without any news either of his victim or her supposed avenger; and such faint remorse as he was capable of feeling became gradually fainter, till he began to persuade himself that he was rather to be pitied for the detection, than blamed for the practice of a stratagem, so admirably calculated to break off a foolish engagement without wounding the pride of the person forsaken. That she should have been so deeply—he might say so perversely—attached was only a part of the ill-luck that had attended him through all this unfortunate affair. But though he reasoned thus, there were moments when that last look of poor Dolores, appealing from himself to Heaven, was distinctly before him, and he would have given worlds never to have known the dark eyes that had gleamed on him so reproachfully. Meanwhile his fashionable appearance and popular manners had gained hosts of acquaintance. Walking one day on the public promenade with some of the newest of these friends, he saw in an opposite direction two persons approaching, one glance at whom was sufficient to raise the colour in his cheek, and to check the bantering laugh with which he heard one of them deny an imputed passion for the belle of the season. Though still distant, a throb at his heart told him that the tall figure whose deep mourning marked him so distinctly out from the showy uniforms and light summer hues of the other strollers, could be none but Rafael Gonzales. The purpose of his coming flashed across his mind, and preparing to encounter him in a manner that might show he was not desirous of avoiding an explanation, he fixed his eyes on him, and awaited the moment that their looks should meet. A casual observer might have remarked little emotion in the stern regard of the Spaniard, but in the compressed lips, and a glance that shot like smothered fire from his eyes, the Baronet saw plainly his suspicions were correct, and that he had come there in search of him. He stopped as Gonzales approached, and at the same moment the sharp cut of a cane completely across his face deprived him of all power of

discerning the objects before him. The violence of the stroke not only raised a weal of flesh, but cut him so severely over one eye, that, literally blinded, and smarting with agony, he stood at the mercy of his assailant. The latter, however, instead of repeating the blow, exclaimed, —

"Miserable liar and dastard! will this induce you to seek satisfaction?"

"Monsieur," said one of Sir Caversham's friends, interposing, "this is rather the conduct of an assassin than of a man of honour."

"Assassin, or what you will," replied he, "so that this man escape me not!"

The instant in which these few words were exchanged had sufficed for Sir Caversham to recover his recollection. He threw himself on Gonzales, and would have borne him to the ground, had not the interference of the bystanders and the remonstrances of his friends reminded him that to pursue the affair further in that place would give it a publicity that might put it out of his power to obtain revenge—yes, revenge! for it was no ordinary duel that must now be fought. To call satisfaction that which either the wrongs of Dolores, or the stinging insult written in scarlet characters across the brow of her unworthy lover, demanded, would be to mock the feelings of each. Even their friends were forced to allow, that to propose any thing like accommodation to either would be as wise as to come between the dragon and his wrath, for if Gonzales were wrought by intense hatred to a calm almost resembling coldness, the eastern blood of his adversary was now worked up to a pitch of ungovernable fury that seemed akin to madness.

With these feelings, it will not surprise our readers if one of those barbarous encounters was agreed on that still occasionally mock and disgrace our boasted civilization. The result may be learned from the following paragraph, copied from the newspapers of the day: —

"FATAL DUEL AT BADEN BADEN.

"A dreadful event has thrown a gloom over the gaieties of this place.

"Sir Caversham Harley having been grossly insulted by a Spanish officer, a challenge ensued. It was agreed that the adversaries should fire in turn, and that either pistol missing fire, a second shot should be allowed. Having been placed at fifteen paces, and the right of first shot falling to Sir Caversham, he fired, mortally wounding his antagonist in the breast: the latter, however, retained sufficient strength to raise his pistol, but after three several attempts, the cap not exploding, it was changed. During this dreadful interval the wounded man sustained himself with great difficulty, observing to his second, while the last pistol was loading, 'that he must make haste, as his strength was fast failing;' and as he fired, he added, 'I cannot have missed him; I took good aim!' At the same instant Sir Caversham fell, shot through the heart.

"The Spaniard survived a few hours in great agony. The seconds have taken to flight."

SEA-SIDE LORE.

GATHERED BY THE MOUNTAINEER.

A NIGHT IN THE LIGHTHOUSE.

It was the time of the equinox. The wind raged and beat against the brown-red island with unusual fury. For days a ship had not been seen upon the reeking ocean, and the boldest of pilots had not dared to encounter the battling of the elements. The business of the pilot had ceased, and by degrees a desolate tranquillity reigned upon the shore. Next-door neighbours were neglected, and the universal friend, mine host of "The Red Water," found himself almost without a companion : now and then — but at very long intervals — a solitary figure might be seen leaning against the Fallm, and a few old pilots, to whom it had become almost a condition of their existence to read the wind and weather in the open air, crawled out in spite of the elements, and looked with quiet eye and folded arms upon the dashing waters. Protected by the beaconage, they sat for hours together, defying the briny vapour, hurled over the rocks to them by the boisterous surge, and watched in vain for the appearance of a sail. Shells, seaweed, and shingle were flung by angry Neptune into the streets of the highland, and whirled against door and casement. Heligoland, the storm-accustomed, shrunk from the violence of the unprecedented tempest, and she trembled and writhed again as though suffering from an ague fit.

The watchman of the lighthouse, although more exposed to the fury of the hurricane than any other, was perhaps the only man in the island of whom it could be said that he looked upon the appalling weather with perfect equanimity. He was a fine, very old, grey-headed man, with nothing young about him save his clear water-bright eyes and unfading memory. The greater part of his long life had been spent upon the sea, in conflicts with men and elements ; and he could boast of having, oftener than once, sailed round the world. His mind was strong and acute, his heart rough as the rugged stone upon which he first walked, yet humane and gentle withal. He was a man of large experience, had seen much in many lands, and had grown wiser and better with the knowledge he had gained. Originally a child of poor Heligoland parents, thrown by indigence and want upon his own exertions, he had forced his way upwards in life by an iron perseverance, an intrepid resolution, and a stubborn

obedience — the noblest virtue of the genuine seaman — which had never deserted him; and now, at the close of his laborious career, with his small saved-up earnings, he passed his last days, as he deserved, independently, and after his own heart, as keeper of the lighthouse recently erected on his native shore. Henrick was by nature taciturn: a look, a nod, a sign, were with him often the sole exponents of his thoughts. In fine weather he spoke least: he had then, as it seemed, neither time nor inclination to give his attention to others. He would sit in summer weather gazing on the broad expanse of waters, his eye fixed upon the rippling surface, following the play of light and shadow created by the sailing clouds, and discoursing, you might guess, secretly and lovingly with the aerial images. But though taciturn, Henrick was not morose: his soul was cheerful; for in such undisturbed communings an inward joy burst like a sun-beam across his weather-beaten face; and he looked the happiest of the happy as, leaning over the freestone of the lighthouse, he buried his hands in the capacious pockets of his rough coat, and chewed his own favourite tobacco. It was otherwise with him in the time of storm. Let the salty sea-mist once begin to drive against his well-secured watch-tower, and then he grew lively enough. His tongue was unlocked — his spirit willing, and even eager, for discourse. At such seasons nothing pleased him better than to see a band of young pilots stepping into his little chamber for their glass of grog and evening chat. His lamp once lighted, and nobody could be so welcome, — I say *his lamp once lighted*; for this not done, the tower was closed against every visitor. Henrick had a solemn regard for his vocation. His best friend might not ascend to the lighthouse top and enter the surmounting glass-cap. It was his belief that the flame which guided the mariner along his perilous path was sacred as the holiest things of earth, — and he made no secret of his faith. “A beacon,” he said, “that a sailor trusts to must be looked after like a human creature, and be cherished with devotion. The flame loses its strength when strange and inquisitive eyes stare upon it. It gets terrified, grows dim, and then with its dull and melancholy light misleads poor seamen, and takes them upon reefs and shallows.”

No one thought of ridiculing the old man's superstition. His peculiarities were harmless, and it was not difficult to be reconciled to them. Let the peaceable fire once shine upon the island, and many a gay lad would read his signal for enjoyment, and make his way to the lighthouse. He was sure of his welcome: and though the dwelling was not of the largest, it could still hold a merry company. The seaman is not choicer in his accommodation. Give him at any time comfortable clothing, and the means of free motion for his limbs, and he will not be distressed if his apartment is less capacious than a theatre.

The hurricane had lasted four days, and was growing fiercer than ever. Henrick, according to custom, roused himself from his dreamy condition, and broke the silence that was natural to him. Upon the evening of the fourth day he was gladdened by a knocking at his door, and the appearance of half a dozen young Heligolanders, who

had come to make a night of it. Their faces were reddened by the wind, which had likewise whipped their eyes until tears poured from them. The ancient mariner stretched out his broad hand, and gave them all a hearty greeting.

"Eh, this is weather, lads!" said he. "I knew yesterday that we should have it worse to-day. The lamp-screens were steaming away, and wouldn't brighten for all my rubbing and cleaning. Mark me! it will be still worse before morning. The surf keeps spirting up over the rock, flinging shingle and mud as high as the lighthouse." With these words Henrick stirred his turf fire, made himself a snug seat in his old arm-chair, and called to his grandchild for his homely supper. The latter brought him some tea and toast, and then mixed some grog for her grandfather's guests.

"How comes it, Henrick," said Koben, the youngest pilot, "that you are so good-natured and sociable in bad weather, and so silent and grumpy when the sun shines? It seems to me to be against human nature. I can understand a fellow's having a dread of storm and hurricane, and being silent whilst the elements fight like devils; but——"

"Stop, lad!" replied Henrick, interrupting him; "you are wrong there. Chickens, women, and land-rats are frightened by a storm—a true sailor is revived. Don't you see that that's just the time when he can show the world that he's a reasoning, thinking creature, who knows how to deal with the raving cries and screams of Nature. A seaman who is faint-hearted in a storm should be first keel-hauled, and then drowned. In quiet weather," he continued, after a pause, during which he had harkened to the howling of the elements,— "in quiet weather there's no art in living upon the water; though, to be sure, strange things at all times come to pass upon it. The temper of the deep, her secrets, and her strength, are only to be learnt when she begins to get angry—when she rises against man and his works. You are wrong, Master Koben. What say you, lads; would you like to hear a curious history that came to an end many years ago on this very shore? I am in the humour for prating; and you shall have it, if you will!"

The pilots were pleased enough at the proposal: they pushed the old man's stool nearer to his arm-chair; Fanny replenished the glasses; and Henrick himself, once more listening to the wind, and satisfying himself that the good old rock defied the storm as bravely as it had done a thousand years before, turned to his visitors without delay, and told his tale as follows:—

It is as near as possible fifty years since I came home from the East Indies, on board of a Hamburg merchantman. It was at this very time of the year. Nothing remarkable happened till we had doubled Cape Finisterre, and then there appeared all the signs of a threatening storm. The horizon was, for all the world, as if hung round with a large trembling cloth, the gulls circled about our ship in flocks, and a little fleet of didappers breasted the sea, carelessly suffering themselves to be carried on by the lazy and deep-rolling waves. The glittering bodies of countless dolphins were often visible

above the water's surface, darting, at intervals, over a rising billow, and then turning topsy-turvy in the air—as sure a sign of storm, my boys, as any that I know. In the Bay of Biscay, and at no great distance from the Channel, sure enough the storm broke loose, and, in the course of a very few hours, we were at the mercy of the most awful hurricane that I have known in all the years that I have been a seaman. It was just as easy for us to chain the wind as to steer our ship. We were driven with frantic speed out of our course, and almost pitched into the Atlantic, that was foaming and fuming away, as you may suppose. The dreadful weather lasted for six days without the slightest intermission. No ship ever was in greater danger—no ship's crew nearer to Davy Jones's locker; and yet, strange to say, from beginning to end, our severest disaster was the loss of our bowsprit and some stay-sail not worth mentioning.

Every thing has an end, and so had this hurricane, though not before we were all heartily sick of it. The sky brightened up again, the wind hushed, and the sea, panting heavily, like a monster breathing after a continued rage, gradually assuaged. When we could look about us we discovered that we had been driving nor'ards, and were within a few hours' sail of the Faroe Islands. The air, which before the tempest was close and sultry, had become as cold as ice. Right before us, away in the distance, we could see sparkling icebergs gliding along. By day they looked like polished silvery pyramids, or fantastically cut castle walls emerging from the grey sea; at night, by the uncertain lustre of the moon, you might have taken them for spirits of the ocean, as they stole along the horizon, wrapped in dusky vapour.

The wind blew steadily and briskly from the nor'west, so that it was only by very careful tacking that we could make at all for southerly latitudes. The proud and rigid North asserted his rights, and made us feel his power. At night it froze hard, and the sea fog settled itself in white hoar flakes upon every mast and sail. After the lapse of another week we reached the northern point of Scotland, and then we sailed southwards, between the Shetland Isles, into the German Ocean. Here, by way of a change, we were becalmed. Now and then there came a few puffs of wind to tantalize us, but they were rapid and short. I have got a habit of comparing the sounds of the deep to the sounds of human nature; and I should say, if you can understand me, that these puffs were like the heavy sighs of a sick creature, that was longing and yearning for its recovery.

We could very plainly distinguish the jagged, black, massy rocks of the Scottish coast, and the snow-wrapped mountain-tops peeping forth brightly into the night. A fresh wind sprung up, and we steered the usual course. So we were going on, when one night—it was about twelve o'clock—there was a sudden cry on board, a loud hallooing from the men on the watch, and every man-jack jumped like lightning from his hammock, and rushed upon deck to inquire into the cause.

The sea was pretty quiet: all round the horizon rested dark weighty clouds, thickly packed upon one another, and very slightly silvered at

the edges by the descending moon. The ocean, save here and there enlivened by the bright crest of a broken wave, was enveloped in deep gloom. We gazed on every side, eager to learn the reason of our summons, and the meaning of the unusual disturbance amongst the watch; and you may believe me when I tell you—my very blood curdles as I think of it—that what we very soon saw struck us for some minutes dumb, and almost lifeless.

About three or four hundred yards to our north'ard, there stood upon the black waters the hull of a very large ship. STOOD! for there wasn't a rag of canvass there—no ship's lantern—no noise, no bustle—no human being! And, good Heaven! how she looked! Everything about her was white—white as though she had been japanned. Masts, sailyards, ropes, spars, and ladders, all white as snow! The cordage hung motionless upon the masts, like garlands of alabaster; the streamer drooped from the truck like a downward-burning white flame.

Did we look at that horrid thing with astonishment, and fear, and dread? I think we did; and all the while she came on, nearer and nearer to us.

"Half-starboard, Tom!" bellowed the captain, with his hair standing on end. "As sure as I am a sinner she is the Flying Dutchman!"

"Not she, sir," answered Tom, squirting his tobacco-juice through his teeth, whilst his jaws chattered with fright. "Not she, sir—can't be—the thing has got no crew, and she isn't patched together with dead men's bones. The Devil's on board—she is a ship without a soul," continued Tom, his cheeks as pale as death.

"Shall I hail her?" asked the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir!" said I; "we shan't take harm if we treat her decently!"

The captain took up his speaking trumpet, and as well as he could, with a voice that was very much subdued by his alarm, he called to the ghostly-looking vessel, asked her name and course, and the rest of it. No living sign could we see or hear in answer. Only the white-masted monster came on; and in spite of the helmsman, in spite of our bracing the sails, in spite of all hands, she was in less than no time within two ships' distance of us, and driving still closer and closer. Let Tom steer as he would, there she was after us, as if we had been a magnet and she a piece of iron attracted by it. With destruction and death before our eyes, we grasped some stakes and hooks, for the white sailyards, like so many spectres' fingers, had already caught our rigging, and cut through our sails; whilst the hideous carcass lifted itself out of the water, and pressed like a mountain upon our little ship. To avoid a collision, we pushed with our implements against the monster, shouting all the while with terror. The planks responded to our blows with a hollow murmur, the billows washed the creature's deck, and a melancholy cry, like that of a dying man, assailed our ears, and penetrated to our very hearts. We gave ourselves up for lost; but the next minute a sudden blast

of wind tore us asunder, sent the Devil off, and, thank God, saved our lives.

"She is manned," exclaimed the captain, who hadn't recovered yet from the cry. "Look at her! look at her! Heaven! what awful mystery is this that moves upon the waters!"

Breathing again, we followed the phantom with an eager gaze, every man trying to strain his eyes further than his mates. The hull was as quiet and death-like as before. No helmsman stood at the wheel — no sailor at the ship's side. But at the taffrail we could now discern two white figures, motionless and mute, leaning over the breastwork. White garments fluttered about their bodies, declaring them to be human beings. Our captain called to them again; but again to no purpose: and then the ship vanished silently, as she had appeared, in the vapour of the approaching clouds.

There was not one of our ship's crew looking like himself for the twenty-four hours that followed the disappearance of the hull. Every one believed that we had been in the vicinity of the Devil, and that some ill luck would very shortly befall us. Every one had his own conjecture on the subject; and there was nothing too improbable to suspect, or so unlikely that it could not be maintained with the most plausible arguments. Well, the evening came, and nothing happened: then the night. The wind blew strong from the north-east. We set all sail, and flew before the breeze. Ah, there we have it again! There is something before us looking very dim on the water. What is it? A ship or a sea monster? The helmsman puts about. All hands on deck again — all eyes at work — all hearts throbbing. "Shorten sail!" says the captain; and then he himself brought the ship carefully to the dusky object. Ay, ay, there was no mistake about it. There she was — the horrible thing that we had seen the day before, only now — black — black as a coal — hull and mast. Exactly as before, there were the two figures at the taffrail leaning over, like poor unhappy mourners. Their light clothing floated in the night wind. The billows broke mournfully against the hull. We again used our stakes for our protection: two or three snapped as the creature glided by us with the swiftness of a ghost, and passed into the surrounding gloom.

What could she be? We puzzled our brains again and again, and made a hundred strange guesses; not one, however, that was satisfactory. Our captain would have it that she was simply an abandoned ship, given over as a prize to the ocean; that she was her own mistress, roving the sea at her own pleasure. And yet, if such were the case, how were the two apparently female forms at the taffrail to be accounted for?

Next day, the wind veered. It came up sharply from the south-east, compelled us to tack, and drove us back some distance towards the channel. During the night we passed many ships, principally Spaniards: we asked them if they could give us any intelligence of a strange vessel, but they hadn't even seen any thing of the kind: and for the next two days and nights we were fortunate enough to escape another meeting. On the third night, however, about a quar-

ter of a mile a-head of us, the spectre made herself visible. It was a lovely night. The moon almost changed into day ; and she drew, as if with a pencil, the outline of masts and rigging upon the silvery mirror of the slumbering ocean. The two white figures were leaning still, like faithful watchmen, over the breastwork of the taffrail. "They are dead, or else famished," exclaimed the captain. God only knew ; we shuddered ; and the captain went on to pray to Heaven to sink the wanderer, or to hide it from men's eyes for ever. Let me tell you, lads, there is nothing so horrible in this world as a deserted ship, everlastingly driven about by the waves. It is as if the ghostly creature were seeking the soul that had forsaken it. It goes like a shadow over the waters, and seems to get no rest, until these shatter and swallow her up.

We spent three days more, much annoyed and distressed by the wind, and met with no further adventure until, as evening approached, we sighted the lighthouse here on Heligoland. Do you know what home sickness is ? We were not *sick* for home, but absolutely voracious and furious for it ; and you can't be surprised after all our danger and alarm. Our spirits rose wonderfully when we got in sight of shore. Our captain had got some business to do here, and orders were accordingly given to make for land. As for myself, I had not seen the red rocks of my native place for eight years, and my heart was ready to give way for joy. You know pretty well how a Heligolander loves his little bit of red earth ; how he looks forward to it from the stormy sea, and how he longs and hopes to rest his weary head upon it, if he isn't tucked up beforehand in the white foam shroud of old Father Neptune.

The gigantic rock rose magnificently from the deep. A flickering glare from the lighthouse shone down upon it, as it passed on its way to the reflecting sea. We were coming gradually to the shore, when, all on a sudden, a hollow crash resounded in the air. We listened. The sound was repeated—once more—and again. There was nothing to be seen ; we could discover no cause for such a noise. I recollected that pieces of the island give and drop away from time to time, and made the captain easy by telling him the fact. Tom however very soon made him as uneasy, for the next moment he bellowed out—

"Look, look ! the ship ! the ship !"

We followed his outstretched arm, frightened to death, and saw amongst the ledge of rocks that runs far out to sea, and rests on the broad sand, the tall hull of our mute ship, now dismasted, and fast wedged in the jaggy ridge. The surf was already foaming high over the wreck. Blow followed blow. The black hull kicked up its heels, to go aground more violently than ever, and to run with more certainty into the pitiless jaws of the spiteful sea. There were the white figures too, beaming forth as often as the surf rolled back, or burst in frothy eddies, over the unhappy wreck.

"Let go the anchor ; put out the long boat ;" cried the captain. "We'll see the monster that we have had to do with !"

The crew obeyed in silence. Six hands, by command of the captain, jumped into the boat. I was one of them. A sail was hoisted,

a few strokes of the oar helped the wind, and we soon cut through the tractable water.

The ever-watchful eyes of the Heligolandiers had, in the meanwhile, perceived the stranded ship; and all was activity on the foreland. The pilot bell summoned the mariners to the strand; lights waved along the narrow shore; and before we could reach the shoals, a fleet of boats shot from all sides through the water. We were however the first at the wreck, and found the loosened timbers already struggling with the angry surf. At the risk of being washed away, we climbed the deck, and close upon our heels the greedy pilots followed. Eager as you are, my boys, on most occasions, I can tell you that the bravest pilots here felt their ardour cool, and tough hearts sicken. The spectacle was too strange, too new, too fearful to allow the gratification of wicked passions, or even their presence.

The ship, contrary to our expectation, had its full complement of hands. She was really manned — but with DEAD BODIES only — with corpses such as we had never seen before, such as no tongue or pen can describe them. At the mainmast, upon a rich variegated carpet sat two men; they looked like father and son. The elder, wrapped in costly fur, held, with his right hand, the arm of his young companion. He seemed as if he were gently feeling his wrist, whilst his open staring eye, with an evident expression of the deepest solicitude, rested on the boy's face which had dropped upon his bosom. Upon the cabin stairs lay a woman pressing a dead baby to her own cold breast. She was young, slender of figure, sweet featured; lovely as an angel even in death. I think I see her glossy black hair fluttering unloosed in the unruly wind! The scene that awaited us in the cabin was still more singular. Here, upon the cushioned benches lay many bodies; all of which had apparently parted with their souls without much pain. One or two candlesticks with the remains of burnt-out candles stood upon the table; others were lying overturned upon the floor. There was no lack of victuals and drink. Some gentlewomen lay dead in their hammocks. Near one bed, the captain of the ship was kneeling. His head had fallen upon the breast of the corpse asleep within it.

It required some self-command, courage, and contempt of death, not to lose one's reason in the midst of all these horrors. Many a pilot turned paler than the corpses before him, shook from head to foot, and hurried back upon deck again. Once there, he made his way off faster than he came, leaped into his boat, and was ashore again in no time. And can you wonder at it? Not a man would have staid five minutes upon the vessel, if our captain had not found a sheet of paper nailed fast down to the cabin table, which he said contained a full account of the ship and her passengers, and which he made his own crew stop to listen to. This was the substance of the paper: —

The vessel was the property of a Portuguese merchant, and was named the Donna Isabella. The captain's name was Don John Christalvo, and was bound, with his ship, for Java. The freight consisted of tropical fruits, Portuguese wines, and preserves. There were, likewise, a few tons of arsenic, and several cases of cinnabar. Shortly

before setting out from Oporto, Don Christalvo had married a very beautiful young lady, who accompanied him on his voyage to Java. This same lady had been formerly promised by her parents to a daring, ill-mannered, and impetuous man, although she herself had always protested against the act—had said that she could never love him, and therefore would never wed him. Don Rodrigo, for that was the wicked fellow's name, no sooner saw how the maiden loved Christalvo, than he resolved to take a dreadful revenge of both of them as soon as they should marry, and he sent them all kinds of threats thinking to prevent the union. The lovers did not think lightly of his menaces, for they knew his evil temper; still they hoped, by absenting themselves, to put it out of his power to hurt them. Rodrigo learnt their intentions, and when he found he could not upset them, he disguised himself in the most artful manner, and got himself hired as steward on board of the good ship *Isabella*.

Thus the mortal enemy of the newly married couple, unknown to any one, was quite near enough to be the destruction of one or both of them. He knew what food they eat—what wine they drank; and upon this knowledge he built his demoniacal plan of vengeance. One morning he adroitly opened one of the tons of arsenic, and mixed with the wine which they were accustomed to drink more than was required of the fatal poison to cause death. It was not long after the ship had sailed, and, as it happened, on the birthday of Don Christalvo. The captain gave a feast in honour of the day, and invited the whole ship's company to the celebration. Not a sailor was left out. All were as happy as dolphins, drank the health of the young couple over and over again, and, I needn't tell you, drank at the same time their own death! Rodrigo had thrown so much arsenic into the wine, that almost immediately after partaking it the innocent victims began to feel its fearful effects. But the poor women had suffered most—they who had only sipped the wine, and not drunk freely of it.

When Rodrigo perceived the havoc produced by his unparalleled atrocity, and saw that of the whole number he must remain on board the only living creature, he became suddenly horror-struck, and went raving mad. In a fit of insanity and remorse he plunged into the sea, and went to the bottom. The captain had just time enough to draw up a short narration, for within a few hours of the massacre the ship was nothing better than a dead-house.

Amongst the passengers there were, as the ship's list notified, two sisters, following their brother to Sumatra. These were the two figures at the taffrail, which had so many times filled us with amazement and terror. They had, no doubt, taken only a very small portion of the poisoned wine, and, probably, had sought alleviation of their pain in the open air, where, affectionately embracing, they at length calmly awaited the death to which all their fellow passengers had been doomed. According to the date of the paper, the murderous business must have been transacted the day before the storm came on. To withstand its fury, the sisters had lashed themselves to the breastwork, and thus, each reposing on the breast of the other, they had expired in sweet sisterly love.

As soon as we had collected these particulars, we made all haste from the scene of desolation. And it was high time, for the blustering waves were bouncing against the rotten hull with a force that threatened its instant destruction. We buried all the bodies in the sea. No, not all: the two smiling and fond sisters we took with us in the boat, rowed them ashore, and buried them in one grave on the east side of the church. A small tombstone, which weather and neglect together have almost demolished, shows their resting-place.

The next day every vestige of the wreck was gone; and the sea compassionately kept every corpse in her hidden and unfathomable lap!

Henrick ceased; and for a time rested his grey head upon his hand, and continued silent. His listeners, too, touched by the old man's relation, did not attempt to speak. The howling of the hurricane, the rattling of stones, which, hurled by the boiling surf over the cliff, struck vehemently against the lighthouse, at length roused the company from their reverie.

"Heaven!" said Siemens, "This is a night to make the oldest seaman shudder. God help the ships that are at sea!"

"They are safe there," replied Henrick; "much safer than if they were sailing at the mouth of a river. Give me the open sea in time of storm, with a well built vessel, a skilful hand, and a bold heart!"

Whilst Henrick spoke, Fanny entered the room, breathless and alarmed.

"What now?" inquired the grandfather.

"Oh!" answered the girl, "I have been frightened to death. I went out a moment ago, and crept slowly round the tower, to where the cliff sinks down to Möhrmer's Hole, and I could scarcely walk for the beating and bellowing of the wind; and the air was so thick with fog that I could hardly draw my breath. And oh, grandfather, then"——

"Well, what then, child?" exclaimed Henrick, starting from his arm chair; and at the same time the young men drew their sou'westers over their curly hair, and buttoned their heavy rough coats to the neck.

"Oh, I heard such a pitiful moaning! Some poor creature, I am sure, has gone to the bottom!"

"Nonsense!" replied Henrick; "none of our people have put out in this weather, and a strange craft can't have gone to pieces without our knowing it. Can any one ashore have met with an accident?"

"Oh yes, grandfather, that's it!" said Fanny. "It was such a melancholy cry!"

"I believe you, girl," replied Henrick; "but a seaman mustn't always run after melancholy cries, my child! There are evil spirits in the storm, who are glad enough to mislead us if they can. If they hunger after a human life, they will sit for hours on the top of the mist, wailing and crying, in the hope of seducing some unhappy youth to their net."

"Let us go out and see," said Siemens. "In these cases there is nothing like trusting one's own eyes and ears!"

"Quite right, boy!" answered Henrick. "But let us mind what we are about. Look out a strong cable. You shall sling it round my body if you like, and I will grope my way till I get at the voice of the surge as closely as if it were the love-lisping lip of a young wench."

The young pilots were up. They selected a good rope, wound it round the old seaman, and then sallied forth. Henrick placed himself flat upon the ground, to avoid the immense cloud of spray that was enough to choke him. The young men took up their position against the freestone of the lighthouse, where, grappling each other with a nervous hand, they held with a grasp of iron the important cable. Thus placed, the group tarried awhile until the tumult of sea and wind for a few seconds spent themselves in the distance. They listened with intense attention to the muffled roar, and then close upon them, came in truth a tone of deep and piercing lamentation.

"Hold fast, lads!" said Henrick, crawling like a snake over the short, narrow tongue of rock which serves as a bridge across Möhrmer's Hole, until he reached the extreme end of the cliff. The pilots were made aware of the existence and safety of the old man, only by the moving of the rope; for the steamy air and the dashing surf, which still spouted as high as columns over the steep cliff, rendered it absolutely impossible to distinguish a single object. Henrick reached the desired point, and with a voice that had learnt to speak through wind and storm, he bade his friends draw him back the instant that he shook the rope. In another minute, the accents of complaint were repeated. The pilots looked at one another, but before they could utter a syllable, they sounded again more touchingly than ever, and did not cease until the vibration was felt along the quaking rock.

Henrick pulled his cable fiercely. He was drawn like lightning from his perilous position, and assailed with questions. The old man answered with a cunning smile, shook his hoary head covered with froth and sea sand, and then proposed to his companions to return quietly home with him. Fanny met her grandfather and his friends with eyes as full of curiosity as her tender heart was oppressed with apprehension. The latter was appeased by his well-known quiet smile, which, however, stimulated her womanly curiosity. She knew her grandfather too well to ask him a single question. She put in their places again the cable, morion, and tar jacket, heaped fresh fuel on the fire, and waited patiently till it pleased her grandfather to speak again.

"It was just as I suspected," said he, of his own accord, and glancing significantly towards the pilots. "It was the cry of the Island Nymph—that lovely and bewitching spectre. It is the way she goes on when she knows young, vigorous, and handsome fellows to be near. She can never get lovers enough; and it is a saying, that as long as one young Heligolander shall yearly fall a sacrifice to her, the red island is safe from wave and storm. Let her once fail to demand her tribute, and every splinter of the rock shall, by degrees, be swallowed in the deep!"

"Have you ever seen her, grandfather?" asked Fanny. "How does she look?"

"No, my child! Heaven has kept me out of that danger," answered Henrick. "But I knew a brave fellow who listened to her cries, saw her adorning her beautiful hair, hurried to her, and met his death. You shall hear the tale."

"Thank you, grandfather!" exclaimed the eager Fanny, putting her arm about her old grandfather's neck. The old sailor kissed his child, drank off his grog, smacked his lips, put another quid of tobacco into his mouth, and then began:—

Very soon after the English took possession of this island, my lord governor—I forget his name now—had a fancy to make a general survey of the island. It was thought the cunning gentleman had some idea of turning the red cliff into a fortress; for it was about the time that the war between the English and the French was at its highest. My lord, however, had hardly sailed along the north-west side of Heligoland, and discovered the fantastic ruins, the deep clefts, and the immense peaks and ridges of the rock, than it became very clear to him that the broken island was adapted to something far more entertaining than a fortress. These rich Englishmen, as you know, have the strangest whims, and are always ready for some out-of-the-way proceeding.

My lord was a man of taste, and very romantic in his notions. He ordered every body in the island to save up all the empty tar-barrels that came to hand, and to carry them on the first clear, calm night to the northern side of the old rock. When there, they were to be driven into the fissures and clefts, and to be set on fire at ebb tide. He wanted to see the effect of the illumination, not only on the island, but on the quiet sea as well. Englishmen, when they make up their minds to any thing, follow it out in right earnest.

It was the month of August, and we couldn't expect to have a serene sky much longer. There came a capital day for the sport. A warm southerly wind scarcely curled the broad surface of the sea; and if it did ripple, it was only because it smiled invitingly upon the unusual spectacle.

Towards noon there was a perfect calm. The ocean looked like a large brilliant mirror, out of which sun and sky beamed in bright magnificence. The ebb left the feet of the cliff bare, and the sultry air allured the sea-worms from their deep hidden homes into the genial light. Thousands of sea-nettles and molluscas of every colour—rosy red, dark blue, and violet—emerged from the sea, and floated upon the water like open-leaved ocean flowers. As far as the eye could reach along the shore, these life-endowed jewels of the sea played and sparkled, whilst the pointed star-fish, rising and falling, opening and collapsing, glittered at intervals amongst them. Over an emerald-coloured soil hovered curious-looking spiders, making their way to the soft branches of the gently waving polypus, which now feather-like opened out its brown-red plumage, now timorously contracted it, and then permitted it to quiver on upon its grey and cell-like stalks.

At eight o'clock we had flood tide ; the water ebbed quickly, and then the sloops were got ready. The wind was blowing warmly from the south, when about fourscore boats put out, all of them well manned. My lord governor, with his retinue, was rowed a good distance out to sea, so that he might have in sight the whole nor-western side of the island, from Hengist to Sathorn. Time went on, and the night grew darker. The sea shone as if it had been sprinkled over with millions of Indian fire-flies. A rocket, according to his lordship's commands, was the signal for the pilots ashore to set all the tar-barrels on fire at once. It was done ; and such a sight, my lads, isn't to be had every day, I can tell you. I can't describe it to you. The sea was like one great stream of fire. The cliff, here blood-red in the glowing flame, there brought out in black shade, you might have taken for the gates that lead to Pluto's kingdom : that was how it looked to me ! And to render the illusion perfect, there was a party of fine young fellows running about in the light of the flames, doubling their fists, and making all kinds of sounds and gestures. Their shadows were magnified a hundred times against the giant rock, and the whole thing seemed like a fight of infernal spirits, and nothing else.

One of the handsomest fellows I ever cast eyes upon was a fisherman of the name of Jacob, the only son of a very poor widow. He had undertaken to make a great blaze at Möhrmer's Hole, and he did his work in first-rate style, — so well that the English gentlemen, who never can have enough of anything, ordered him to make up a second fire of barrels before his first had gone out.

Such a jubilee, such a diversion, never took place before in Heligoland. Old men, women, and children stood in thick masses at the margin of the cliff, and by their dresses and postures formed such singular groups in the wild glare, that performers and spectators were altogether rivetted and charmed by the sight, and every one of them forgetful of the passing hours.

The night was pretty far advanced, and yet no one thought of going home. It had grown very late, when all at once there was a cry of "*the tide, the tide !*" and the next moment there was a general rush to the boats. There was some reason for the speed, for the surf was already rapidly advancing, and the men were between it and the fatal cliff. All was hurry-scurry. The pilots jumped into their boats, only mindful of their own safety, seized the rudder, and made, with all their might, for the southern point of the island.

Jacob was not one of the number ; for, unfortunately for him, just as he was making his way over the jagged points of rock from the Hole to the beach, a shrill cry for help reached his ear, coming, as he supposed, from YUNG-GATT. He stopped to hearken, and turning his sharp eye towards the spot, he perceived upon the dimly-lighted ground a female attired in blue drapery which was encircled by a sparkling white girdle. Guessing that a boat belonging to the governor's party, in which there were some ladies, had, in making for the island, struck upon the rock, he hailed the figure, and in the same instant hastened to the point of danger. Great was his astonishment, however, when he reached it to find no human being near him. The

same cry, nevertheless, was repeated clearer and more penetrating than before, and this time immediately behind him. Jacob turned, and, frightened out of his wits, caught sight of the female beckoning to him from Möhrmer's Hole. He was now certain that the fascinating creature was none other than the island nymph, endeavouring to lure him on to his destruction. Casting one hurried glance towards the roaring sea, he resolutely retraced his steps, and made for his boat with the speed of lightning. The tide was now running as high as his knees, the red and slippery rocks were covered with the snow-white surf, and he could not move an inch without peril. The greatest good fortune and dexterity only could release him from his critical position.

He crept, out of breath, into the Hole, then leaped over the stony blocks into the thick of the blinding spray, and beat on to the place where his boat was moored. It was gone: some one had taken it. Jacob put his hands to his mouth, and screamed with all his strength to a few boats still at sea, and steering for the southern point. He repeated his cry till the boats disappeared, but his only answer was the same seductive voice that had at first enticed him. As often as he looked back—and look back he did many times against his wish, the unholy figure emerged from the gloomy cave, beckoned lovingly to him with her delicate white hand, and tried hard, by her coaxing, melancholy, and heart-piercing accents, to bring the poor distracted fellow to his certain and untimely death.

The billows came pouring in, and made poor Jack look about him. He pressed close to the rocks, and with his nails caught at the crannies which had been formed by wind and weather. Thus hanging rather than walking, he tried to get forward to the south peak. He was literally covered with sea-foam, and every wave threatened to suck him in. At last, quite exhausted, Jacob let his arms fall at his side, and looked back at the difficult road which he had just passed with so much pains. The flood roared, but above it, like a sweet and touching dirge, poured the pitiful and tempting note of the sea-nymph. He could hear his name uttered. It came with melting sweetness close to his ear, as if borne upon the air from the cliff above. He answered. He called till he grew hoarse, standing in water up to his hips, and once more cleaving with bloody hands to the red rock. The voice of the damsel never ceased: it reached him from the sea; it sounded melodiously before him, behind him, and soon from every side.

He gave himself up for lost; his head dropped upon his chest—he fainted. A ready wave seized him for its prey, tore him from the rock, and dragged him down. As if spurned, he was thrown by the billow against a rock. He grasped at it instinctively, clutched it with the eager despair of a drowning man, then raised himself, and hung to a steep stone perfectly insulated in the dismal waters. On his left was the Hole, still faintly lighted by the glimmering fire; on the right the down, rising like a silver veil from the dark sea. Misery gave the poor fellow the strength of a giant; the smallest hold was a sufficient support to him; and by degrees, and with much exer-

tion, he swung himself higher and higher upon his place of refuge until he happily reached the summit, and found a scanty resting-place upon the narrow surface.

Half dead, smarting with his wounds, wet through and through, Jacob squatted himself upon the desolate fragment, doggedly folded his arms, and stared like a madman upon the bubbles of the swelling sea.

Although his brother pilots had missed him on reaching the shore, they did not suppose for a moment that he had come to any harm. They went carelessly to their own homes, pleased with their night's pleasure, and thinking that Jacob would return at his leisure. His old mother was the last who quitted the beach. She heard the jolly voices of her son's companions, and the endearing expressions of the lasses who welcomed them, and accompanied them to their humble roofs; and she lingered long afterwards upon the deserted strand. She grew unquiet, but comforted herself with the thought that he had gone to the house of one of his friends, and would return later in the night. With this thought she went home, and sat at her fireside, awaiting his return. Here she soon fell asleep; and when she awoke, the first thing that she noticed was her boy's bed, which had not been disturbed. Her son had never before slept from home; and the old woman, seized with unspeakable anguish, burst into tears. She drew aside the small snow-white window-curtain and looked out. The air was as quiet as death; a pale red glimmer was stealing in the east over the sea; the wind was up, and whistling against the small gables of her habitation; the billows were skipping like white lambs.

The banging of a neighbouring door roused the unhappy mother. A few houses off a fisherman stepped out to look at wind and sky. He shook his head, and was about returning to his cot, when Jacob's mother called to him.

"Good morning, Görmers," said the old woman. "Are you putting out?"

"Ay, ay," replied the fisherman. "I should like to see the wind steady a bit; and the streaks over the downs there don't altogether please me!"

"Have you seen my Jacob?" inquired the old woman. "He has not been home all night!"

"What!" exclaimed Görmers, "Jacob not come home! I missed him last night when we landed, but the others told me he was coming on."

"Oh, my poor boy!" screamed the old woman, covering her eyes with her thin withered hands.

"Be quiet, mother!" said Görmers, leading the trembling woman into her cottage. "I'll look after the lad at once; and I promise you, as I am a true pilot, not to come home without him. Go in now, and don't fret!"

Görmers, without loss of time, made known to his friends the strange absence of the young pilot. Some recollected that as they pulled to shore they heard a cry like that of a human voice; but supposing it

to be only the sea's deceptive murmur, they had taken no further notice of it. It was at once resolved to go to sea, and to make for the southern point. It wanted some time yet to sunrise, when a small pilot fleet might be seen leaving the shore, and hastening to the point named. The waves were watched—every floating object sharply looked to—the brave fellows were near upon the south point, when suddenly every oar involuntarily stopped. No one spoke; but all stared at one solitary piece of rock. At last Görmers found his tongue.

"Pull, pull, lads!" said he. "Whatever it is, take my word for it, it is no ghost!"

The boats were again moving. A figure—apparently that of a man—cowered upon the rock, like a statue. The pilots hailed it. The figure moved, extended its arm, attempted to rise, and then dropped, like a stone, into the water. The waves carried the man towards the fleet, and in less than a second the unhappy Jacob was rescued. But though saved, he could not be recognised by one of his faithful acquaintances. He was no longer stout, blooming, and young. An old man, with grey hair, drawn features, haggard and anxious countenance, almost bent double, lay shrinking in the boat, shivering and dumb. He was asked what had happened to him in the night, but he made no reply to the question. In a soft whisper he imitated the melancholy accents that had been his ruin, and smiling timidly, asked if any one could hear the nymph; and, if they could, to beware of her, for she was very cruel, and would hunt them all to death, without mercy or pity.

It was a long time before Jacob was a sane man again: he recovered from the illness which that fearful night brought on, but his hair never lost its whiteness, and made him look old when he was hardly out of his teens. As for his mother, she was pleased enough to have her boy in her arms again, but she took the change that had come over him so much to heart, that she never held up her head again; she fell to moping, and then soon died. As for Jacob, he gave up a sea-faring life,—indeed, he was obliged, for his strength failed him; and he became very reserved and shy. If a storm blew up, or if the fishermen kept out longer than usual, he would be off to the cliff, and sit with folded arms at the furthest end of it, looking all the while, with a fixed eye, down to Möhrmer's Hole, and humming a low mysterious note. He never could get out of his head the cries of that dreadful night: and you have yourselves heard them just now; for rest assured that cry was the song of the nymph, and nothing else.

Poor Jacob! he lived in this way for several years, till one day a gust of wind blew him from his accustomed seat, and carried him into the sea.

A few days afterwards his mangled body was cast on the very spot where, according to his own account, he had first heard the song of the nymph!

"Oh, dear me!" said Fanny, as her father ceased, "what dreadful tales these are! Heaven keep us all from such a cruel nymph!"

"We can't say much good of her, child!" answered Henrick; "and yet she has been known to help many a jolly independent fellow to a piece of good luck that has lasted all his life long!"

"That was like a nymph!" exclaimed Fanny.

"Yes, if nymphs were like you, my pretty!" added Siemens. "Nymphs, like girls ashore, are, I dare say, friendly enough, if they meet with a little opposition!"

"You had better try it on!" said Fanny, laughing.

"That's your sort!" said Henrick. "At her again, Siemens! And come, girl, fill me up another glass, and then we'll have a merry tale. The storm plays glorious music for us; and it would be a downright shame for true pilots not to drink health and long life to the brave musicians. Come, youngsters, I'll give you *The Storm, that feeds us, that rejoices and comforts us with every noble gift of earth, that has been our lullaby and dirge, cradle and grave song, since the world began!* The storm,—hip, hip, hip, hurrah!" The pilots did honour to the toast, and Fanny, like a true Heligolander, had her part in it.

"Now, grandfather!" said the maiden, "your story; and remember your promise—a merry one."

Henrick smiled in his usual dry manner, filled his pipe, put his steaming grog before him, made himself comfortable in his capacious chair, cleared his throat, and then began again.



GULLIVER SEIZING THE FLEET.

JULY.

BY ANDREW WINTER.

How the great sun is shining on the slope
Of strawberry-roots ! Ah ! there's my pet
Running her white hands under the cool leaves,
Diving for the red fruit tassels. I'd have
Some painter now to catch her eager look,
Arch brows, and lips out-blushed by berry juice ;
And just that glint of gold athwart her brow
Let through the rent in her broad summer hat,
Drooping as languid as a poppy flower
On her sunn'd shoulders : 'Twould be a sketch
To hang in my Sir Joshua gallery.
A single word would bring her running up,
Her finger tips like honeysuckle buds
Five-parted, deeply dyed with odorous stains,
And holding some seed-speckled shining prize
Plucked with its brother blossom. — I'll take
The shady holme walk leading to the root-house.
Old Joseph sees me coming down the path,
And wipes his forehead, with a serious look ;
I'll warrant now he's got some curious graft
Or monster flower to show, I hate such tricks
On Nature, (plague take the parchment names
The pruning knave gives to God's simple flowers,)
And yet there's something in the earthy man
That poses one, his shoes look just like roots,
I've watched him in the hot-house, muttering
To the long, hairy, creeping plant, hung up
By four thin threads to the great branching vine ;
And slow I've seen him dodge the blue bottles
With thick, unwieldy fingers, 'cross the panes ;

Then stealthily go feed the Venus' fly-trap.
And as the delicate green leaves curled round
The glist'ning villains, how the clod would grin !
And then he grows such rare prize orchises,
Close-winged papilions, and hum-ceased bees
So delicately poised, they'd cheat a boy
With ready cap — He'll win the medal yet.
The broad sunflowers at the high noon stare,
Their comb-stored discs alive with busy drones ;
Wide open stand the bell-mouthed hollyhocks,
Like thirsty tongues their golden pistils loll
Over the flaring scarlet ; flashing spar
Filed rockwise round the pond, burns up
The fine streaked feather grass. Such noons
I love my great north drawing-room, sketched round
With fresh flag reeds, sheathed water lilies, and
Children white knee'd, striving against swift streams,
With minnow nets. 'Tis luxury such times
To lie and watch the gauzy curtains swell
With the faint breeze, while from the south peach wall
The black and yellow belted wasps sail by
With dreamy sound.

SENSATIONS OF SIXTEEN.

BY A VERY OLD MAN.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt.

HORACE.

A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Hamlet.

"*Je voudrais être femme,*" said a witty Frenchman of our acquaintance the other day, "*pour avoir eu seize ans—cet age quand on aime encore le sucre, et déjà le ball!*" Exactly the French, epigrammatic, antithetic, paradoxical way of expressing what has doubtless passed in one form or other, as a feeling or a fancy, through the head or heart of most men—in some lucid interval of contempt for the dull routine of petty cares and vulgar interests which engross virile existence, and make up what we pompously call our "*affaires.*" Who, indeed, is there

"So blunt of memory, so old at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in grief,"

that he can watch without a wistful interest the palpitating eagerness of sweet feminine sixteen—now anticipating, with tumultuous hopes and fears, the untried glories of the ball-room, or day-dreaming of the fairy-land that lies beyond the curtain of the Opera-house; and anon,

"As though a rose should fold, and be a bud again,"

pursuing with equally lavish enthusiasm some childish ambition of lesson-book or skipping-rope—some enterprise of the school-room or the lawn; or haply essaying, with fresh inquisitive senses, some hitherto untasted flavour or fragrance, of fruit or dewy flower. Happy, ambiguous age, when the old impetuosities of the race and the romp begin to be moderated by nascent instincts of as yet inexplicable modesty; when the half-ripened lips withdraw, with a doubtful coyness, from indiscriminate cousin-kisses; when the ready blush comes to be felt as a strangely-new sensation—an enigma that asks its interpretation of the heart. Happy age, when the clear-ringing laughter of sexless childhood is exchanged still oftener and more often for the maiden's pensive mood; and the myrtle-chaplet twined around the brow in some chance impulse of infantine mirth, remains appropriately to crown the musing Aspirant to deeper than Eleusinian mysteries. Happy age, which the Past, the Present, and the Future—Memory,

Action, Hope—endow with all their privileges, oppress with none of their cares. Not yet has the fair young tree been mutilated by the harsh surgery of the pruning-knife; not yet has the reluctant mother, yielding to the inevitable constraints of our corrupt and ill-organised society, begun her sad task of repression,

“With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.”

Not yet has the warmth of native feeling been subdued to the standard of conventional reserve; nor a factitious code of etiquette superseded the pure guidance of intuitive delicacy; nor the young emotion, that might betray too much, become inured to its mask of assumed indifference—which too often, alas! in the end, leaves but little emotion to be concealed. Still, at bright sixteen, fair hope writes happy promises on the open book of life, over whose folded page memory “with sad eyes” will hereafter mourn in secret. Golden, irrevocable moments of blythe sixteen, how carelessly are ye squandered! Earnest plastic feelings of credulous sixteen, how soon by the rude handling of experience are ye hardened and perverted. Alas! impatient sixteen, yearning for the fulfilment of dimly apprehended revelations—soon enough will the curtain of the future be raised—soon enough will the great hierophant, Time, draw back those friendly folds that protect the illusions, while they hide the disappointments of life. Wherefore, gentle sixteen, be happy in your own pure thoughts, and “innocent daily habits;” satisfy your naïve curiosity, enjoy your vivid impressions; observe and feel—wonder and learn—while sensation and perception keep their first keen edge, and spotless fancy may still wander free. And if ever, in the pauses of your jocund activity, you find time to keep some artless record of your April-existence—so common-place—yet so full of poetry!—how gladly will grey age, stopping on the brink of the tomb, accept your little present; well pleased to forget his wrinkled knowledge in your simpler, surer wisdom,—to mimic your bell-toned prattle in his husky broken bass,—to renew his long-forgotten faith in your happy illusions!

And lo! even as we write, here lies before us the very gift we were invoking;—a tiny volume, appropriately clad in pale spring-green, and presenting a series of the freshest possible impressions of London and Paris life, as reflected in the *camera lucida* of a young girl's heart—the honest heart of sixteen.*

We have read the cheerful little book all through, with an involuntary smile, like childhood's, playing incessantly about our lips, and unfrowning our old brow; while such a swarm of by-gone fancies and associations came crowding back into our snowy pate, as we have not revelled in for many a long year, and hardly thought to enjoy again. Not that the book pretends to any great literary merit, or claims to rank high as an original work; on the contrary, it is put forward with becoming diffidence, as a series of observations probably deficient

* “Impressions and Observations of a Young Person during a Residence in Paris, with occasional Visits to London,” &c. 1844.

in novelty and interest, and "offered only to show how national peculiarities and habits strike persons in different ways." But there is the frankness of unsophisticated sixteen in every page; and the thoughts are so simply expressed, and so natural, that they seem to have come up spontaneously, like daisies in a meadow—all the fresher, too, for being watered by a shallow stream of delightfully transparent philosophy, through which the childish errors shine like many-coloured pebbles in a brook. With what a charming naïveté, for example, is the transitional character of sixteen, with its lingering affection for sugar-plums, and its incipient predilections for dress and dance, betrayed in the following succinct confession:—

"In quitting France I should miss three things: shoes, stays, and chocolate *bombons*."

Who does not recognise in the following little anecdotes his own childish imaginings of royal splendour, and the feverish excitement of his first night at the opera or the play:—

The imagination always surpasses the reality; I have seen French persons who, having read and heard of the sea running mountains high, have been much disappointed upon first seeing it at Dieppe only a little rippled. When taken to the child's ball at Court, my thoughts were wholly engrossed by the throne, which I was to see there: when shown it, however, I could not help expressing my disappointment. I had read so much of Solomon's throne with the jewels and beautiful golden lions surrounding it, that I had expected to see something like it, and that it would have been illumined with a blaze of light; whilst, on the contrary, the room was dark, compared to the adjoining ball-rooms."

I can distinctly remember, when taken for the first time to the French Opera, entering the house with fear and trembling, from the belief that all the spectators would be called upon to dance, for which I was not quite prepared. The opera was "*La Tentation*;" the grand staircase in the first act, down which the inhabitants of the infernal regions descend in such number, is calculated to impress a young mind with something like supernatural awe. It did mine, and I had no sleep that night, or rather dreamt all night of Monsieur Somebody, with large black wings, joining the infernal *galop* with Madame Somebody else, whose names I have forgotten, or most likely never heard.

With what exquisite unconsciousness does our grave little moral philosopher touch the tenderest point of French manners in the following simple remark; which, had it emanated from an older pen, might have been taken for a bit of covert irony:—

The heroines of almost all the French plays and tales that I have seen or read, are young widows; in English, they would not have been already married; the French appear to begin where the English leave off; I have never heard this properly accounted for, but have always preferred English books, probably from feeling more sympathy with the heroines.

"The French appear to begin where the English leave off!" Oh! *les enfants terribles!*

How likely to have impressed the waxen memory of childhood, the subjoined little incident; and how natural to enthusiastic sixteen, the reflection with which it concludes:—

The general sympathy for the Queen and Royal Family here, upon the occasion of their bereavements, was most natural. Every body who ever had the good fortune to know them, must appreciate their goodness of heart; my opportunities have been

me, but I remember when first taken to a child's ball at Court, it happened that I had a chilblain, and as the heat caused my shoe to shrink and my foot to swell, I suffered much, and limped. The Queen, whose kindness to children is proverbial, seeing a poor little thing limping about, took great interest in my suffering, and the Duchess of Wurtemberg, then Princess Marie, now an angel in Heaven, watched my shoe being arranged so as no longer to hurt me, with all the kindness of an elder sister. Poor Princess Marie! I sometimes think I could consent to die, to leave behind me such a memorial as her *Jeanne d'Arc*.

Dress, decoration, and deportment fill a large space among the impressions and meditations of sixteen, as the following extracts make manifest:—

"French ladies, although plainly dressed, have so much good taste, that their apparel is always elegant and sets well. English *Marchandes de modes* and *couturières* are apt to overload with ornament, or, as the French so well express it, *chargent*; they will not understand that a really well made dress rather loses than gains by their favourite 'trimmings,' and with them there is no end to the feathers, flowers, and ribbons. The French, on the contrary, seek to combine the greatest elegance with the greatest possible simplicity; every thing must be rich and good, but never overloaded."

"Many a French room, otherwise wanting in comfort, is ornamented with looking-glasses; they add much to the beauty, and, by reflection, to the apparent size of rooms. I have sometimes thought, that constantly seeing themselves reflected in glasses, which, in a small French apartment is almost unavoidable, may account for the air of coquetry of which French young ladies are sometimes accused; it is impossible to be untidily or carelessly dressed when you see yourself at every turn.

The good taste displayed in ladies' collars is one of the characteristics of Paris; the embroidery is frequently most elaborate, and its delicacy as exquisite as its richness. The collars are as perfect in their form as in their execution; a *Parisienne* would never feel at ease, if she conceived for a moment that her collar did not set perfectly well.

"The fashion of curling the hair becomes more general in Paris, and the classic shining *bandeaux* have been partially abandoned for ringlets; the rich abundant curls of the Duchesse de Nemours may have given rise to the change. Several actresses have adopted it, but they go too far, and make themselves the slaves of their curls, fearing to turn their heads lest they should derange their *coiffure*. A pretty little actress of the *théâtre du Vaudeville*, who played before the Queen at Eu, never moves her head without her shoulders accompanying it, for fear of any misfortune happening to her fair long ringlets.

A Frenchman would not be seen giving his arm to a lady on each side. The inattention to this custom, by the English renders them often an object of ridicule when walking in the streets, or in places of public amusement in Paris; the French call it *panier à deux anses*. If a Frenchman is seen with two ladies, he gives his arm to one, the second lady taking the arm of the other."

At theatres and other public places in France, except at the Italian Opera, which is usually resorted to, previously to balls and other *réunions*, young ladies are seldom seen *décolletées*; the exposure of the neck and shoulders is not considered good taste; when the dress is low, the neck is usually covered by a scarf or collar. Children, too, are generally more warmly clad here than in England; the French attributing the cause and prevalence of consumptive complaints to the want of sufficient clothing in childhood.

Here is a pretty trait of *mœurs* prettily noted:—

"Many a servant or peasant in going to market, many an artisan in going to his daily work, enters a church, and remains there in some corner unobserved; this must

arise from piety of the heart ; nobody perhaps thinks better of them for doing it, nor would think worse of them if they did not. The cold stone replaces the cushioned *prie-Dieu* among the poor, nor appears too hard to those who enter the church to pray unobserved."

Sixteen, at church, directs particular attention to subjects matrimonial ; and she delivers most matronly opinions about nurses, babies, and the unfolding intellect : —

"One of the most beautiful groups in the Madeleine is that of marriage, by M. Pradier ; it is on the right hand side immediately on entering ; the three personages composing it, the priest, bride, and bridegroom, have each a distinct and striking beauty.

"It has often surprised me never to have seen noticed by an older observer, or an abler pen, the vast difference between French and English nursery maids and *bonnes d'enfants*. In England, it is not uncommon to see young children left to the care of girls from fifteen to seventeen, the most thoughtless age in life ; to whom, to trust one's property would be considered almost madness, whilst the most precious of all treasures, young children, are freely confided to them ; indeed it would seem that girls disqualified by youth and inexperience for any other service are best suited for this. A poor woman who would not dare to offer her daughter as a cook, house, or laundry-maid, will freely do so for a place in the nursery. In France, there is no sight more agreeable than the respectable, matronly-looking *bonnes d'enfants* who are seen in the costumes of their province, attending their young charges either in the Tuileries garden, at Paris, or in the shade of the *promenade publique* which generally surrounds every French country town."

"French mothers and nurses roll up their infants until they look like little mummies ; this must be very injurious, by confining the natural motions and growth of the child, which, on beginning to walk, has no strength in its legs, and must grow a weakly frail thing. English children in their long dresses, look much prettier, and, being at liberty, are more likely to be healthy ; I have even heard French people acknowledge the superiority of English children, and I cannot account for this barbarous system being persevered in."

"A great writer has said that there is nothing so beautiful in the world as the mind of a young child ; this might never have struck me without having read it ; but it is quite true. I have a little brother, much younger than myself, and to watch the expansion of his intellect from infancy to childhood has been most delightful. I suppose it will continue with his increasing years, but when an innocent child grows into a mischievous young *gamin*, although it is quite natural and proper that it should be so, the interest in him continues, but the sources of his amusements and pleasures are not quite so apparent or agreeable as when he was younger."

Water, as it appears in fountains, fogs, and dew, is treated of by our sprightly, versatile young friend, in three consecutive paragraphs : —

The want of fountains in London appears strange ; the French are very fond of them ; Paris abounds in them ; and the *Place de la Concorde* owes its chief beauty to them. They give the capital an air of coolness and gaiety, particularly in summer. The French excel in out-door ornaments.

The greatness and beauty of London consist in more useful and durable establishments, although sometimes less pleasing to the eye ; perhaps too it is considered that there is water enough in London without adding artificially to it. The magnificent Thames, the Serpentine, and pieces of water in the parks and Kensington Gardens, are worth all the fountains of Paris.

Fogs are not, as many suppose, entirely unknown in Paris; they even continue for some days; but, wanting the smoke and atmosphere of London, are neither so thick nor so yellow. A Parisian fog is vapory, and looks like the ghost of a London one; it does not give the same melancholy appearance to the town.

One of the delights of the country in England is the refreshing dew. English persons are generally quite afraid of walking at night, on account of the dampness: to me it is delightful. The climate of France is so dry that dew is nearly unknown, the evenings of summer are not relieved by any damp, and are often more oppressive than during the day.

To the effect of dew may possibly be attributed the *fratcheur*, as the French call it, of the English complexion, that beautiful union of red and white, so much more pleasing than the dead white admired in the Parisian cheek. A French lady, Madame de G——, née Princesse de B——, has been heard to say, that whenever there was a *brouillard*, she either walked in the open air, or put her head out of the window, in the hope of catching some English *fratcheur*.

Apropos of fountains, we may observe, that they are by no means appropriate ornaments to the Capitals of cold rainy countries. Doubtless, a fountain is beautiful, spouting its lucid water high into the clear sunshine, breaking in mid-air into a thousand flashing prisms, and falling back in graceful curves upon the ringing marble; but, without the sun, what becomes of its life, light, and colour? what object can look more pitiable, or strike the fancy with a stronger sense of inconsistency, than a fountain, on a bleak November day, *wet through* in a drenching rain? One longs to provide the rheumatic-looking Tritons with umbrellas. Jesting apart, the true purpose of a fountain is to cool a sultry air, and to supply it with the quantity of moisture necessary for healthy and agreeable respiration. The true and the beautiful are too intimately connected for that which shocks common sense ever to affect pleasurably a correct artistic feeling. London fountains, therefore, should be kept playing in the hot summer months only; during the season of rain and snow the water should be turned off: to fit them for which intermittent action, the design of the masonry and sculpture should be such as to have monumental effect and beauty independently of the flow of water. We know not what may be the intention of the architect with respect to the fountains in Trafalgar Square; but we trust never to shiver at the spectacle of two dreary *jets d'eau* laboriously drilling their way through a dense London fog, and drizzling back, with a chilly patter, into the leaden lack-lustre pools beneath.

Many of the subsequent observations are entertaining, and they are all more or less characteristic of sixteen; some as noting odd little details of fact and fashion, which the less microscopic perceptions of older observers would scarcely have descried; others, on the contrary, as betraying the secret ambition of sixteen to add a little to its age—to be taken for a personage of discreet years, grave experience, and judicious counsels; which elderly lucubrations are, perhaps, the most amusingly sixteenish of all:—

“One of the peculiarities of Paris, which the summer visitors never see, is the *marchand de marrons*; he arrives from the country upon a certain day, with his apparatus and stock of chesnuts, and takes possession of his winter quarters, generally at the corner of some well frequented street. Habit has rendered him expert

in his special mode of cookery, and his customers are by no means confined to casual passengers, the inhabitants of the neighbourhood being supplied by him. You are only attracted to him by his *fourneau* for he makes no noise; mercurial as the population of this country is said to be, I question if an Englishman in the same situation could resist, seeing a crowd pass him, from crying 'Hot chesnuts!' The perfect silence of the *marchand de marrons* is really remarkable; the day of his departure is as regular as that of his arrival."

"The number of children, of which, with their nursery maids, every square appears to be full in London; the groups in the streets of those of the lower order, who would hardly be supposed old enough to be trusted alone, yet carrying a younger brother or sister, unable yet to walk, is very striking after Paris, where, from the scarcity of children, it would appear as if King Herod had passed that way."

"The English shopkeepers appear in an unfavourable light after the French; the civility amounts to servility; they thank you so much for nothing, and offer so many things which you do not want, that to enter a shop in London becomes disagreeable. I have often thought what would be their behaviour if, after giving an infinity of trouble, one purchased nothing,—whether all the politeness with which they overwhelm you, might not be turned into a different channel."

"The Parisian cemeteries are very pretty, both in situation and general appearance; much pure and unaffected feeling is displayed in the inscriptions, and in the little gardens with which most of the tombs are ornamented. The whole breathes a melancholy but pleasing air of sentiment, without the gloom which attaches to churchyards. There is only one drawback—the intimation that the gardener of the establishment keeps up gardens by the year, which raises a suspicion that all the pretty flowers may not be the offering of affection, but are sometimes placed there by mercenary hands. I trust and believe, however, that this is only resorted to by persons who are obliged to quit Paris, and are anxious that the graves of those they have loved best may not be neglected."

"In one of the numbers of the *Journal des Demoiselles*, a work that I would recommend to the attention of young ladies as containing much amusing information, there is a translation from Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, describing the different forms of national vanity in the person of a Frenchman who lavishes all his praise on France, and an Englishman who speaks of his country with sarcastic despondency. The Frenchman finds in his country every thing that is good and great; whilst the Englishman can find in England nothing either good or great; until the Frenchman, having satisfied his own vanity, is obliged to help the Englishman out by taking a pinch of snuff, and adding, 'you too are a very great nation, very.' Go where they may, the French never forget their country in the beauty of others; when describing the finest capitals of Europe, they will observe, '*C'est bien, mais cela ne vaut pas Paris*;' to the mountains of Switzerland and the plains of Italy, their reply is, '*C'est joli, mais cela ne vaut pas notre beau pays de Normandie*.' The English, on the contrary, although surrounded at home by every beauty and comfort, either from modesty or disinclination, seldom mention them, much less do justice to them. If the two countries were reversed, and a Frenchman went to London, and saw there *tonneaux* of the *porteurs d'eau* as in Paris, he would instantly exclaim: 'In my country, the *métropole du monde civilisé*, we have water and gas in every house, railroads to every town, and ships to every quarter of the globe.' The English in Paris most amiably keep all this in the back ground; admire the fountains at which the water-carrier fills his cart, the flowers which have not half the perfume or beauty of their own: the gas which dazzles in the theatres, but in half the streets of Paris does not even exist; and the toy of a railway to St. Germain, now extended by English money and workmen to Rouen. The French are quite right; they have a magnificent capital, embellished with the finest monuments and *objets d'art*; a country containing two climates, growing corn at one end, and wine and olives at the other; they appreciate accordingly all they have, whilst the English never appear more de-

lighted than when depreciating the verdant beauty and commercial magnificence of our country, and appearing only to recollect that the one produces damp and the other smoke.

"Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* attracted so many persons to visit this venerable cathedral, that the bell ringer who shows the upper part of it, being continually asked for *Quasimodo's* room, and forgetting, or rather not knowing that the whole was a fiction, has actually adopted a shed near the belfry to satisfy the curiosity of the Parisians in this respect."

"The harness of the post-horses in France is very rough, sometimes consisting of little but a collar and ropes. The postilions have a characteristic air which they owe chiefly to their costume. The term *post boy* would apply less than in England, as they are generally men of large stature. The great boots and powdered *queues* are no longer common. The boots, however cumbersome, could not be said to be entirely useless, for I remember to have seen a postilion fall from his horse, and the wheel of the *calèche* go over his leg; but, to our surprise, he got up unhurt. Some of the postilions have such perfect command of their whips as to crack a simple air with it: I have heard '*Au clair de la lune*' given in a manner not to be mistaken.

"The Musée at Versailles, beautiful as are the great gallery, the paintings by Vernet, and the collection of old masters in the upper story, contains some very indifferent pieces; so confused and unfinished, that they remind one of "*Mort du général je ne sais qui, à la bataille de je ne sais quoi*." The only wonder is, how so great a number of paintings and statues could be gotten together and beautifully arranged in so short a time, except that like the embellishments of Paris, the establishment of foot pavements, the completion of public buildings, the fortifications, in a word all that the King of the French undertakes, appears as if done by magic; if works of utility and magnitude confer upon their author the title of great, surely *Louis Philippe* is a truly great man.

"Public attention was, a short time since, much attracted by a remarkable building operation on the *boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle*: the road has been lowered, during which the foundations of the houses were entirely cut away; it thus became necessary to support the upper part of the houses, whilst the lower part was rebuilt; the cutting away the road having, however, left a greater space than existed before, afforded room for an additional story; as the addition was from below, the people above found themselves raised a floor higher from the new road. This became the subject of a laughable little piece at a minor theatre. A person, having left his wife in Paris in their apartment *au second*, returns from a journey to Algiers; his home on the second floor, which he enters as usual, having, during his absence, become a third floor, gives rise to the usual equivocal of a man making himself at home in another person's house, until the change is explained to him, and he is told that his wife is above in her old apartment, which has from a *second* thus curiously become a *troisième*.

"The Elysian fields are now paved!"

"The *pommes de pin*, which were introduced last year for lighting fires, are very convenient; if kept dry, they ignite immediately with a match, and when placed under the wood kindle it without further trouble, giving out an agreeable aromatic smell. As well as immediately recovering an expiring fire, they look ornamental when piled in a basket at the fire-side."

"During my visits to French *châteaux*, I have often asked myself whether country-houses and villas in England have the superiority over the *châteaux* of France; they have both their beauties and *agréments*, corresponding with the different taste of each country. The long avenues of beautiful old trees, which usually lead to the French *château*, although formal, are not without a certain air of majesty, whilst the dark wood which overhangs and forms a magnificent background, throws an appearance of melancholy grandeur over the whole. I shall not

readily forget the effect one such as described had upon me while travelling on a dark night; there must have been a *fête*, for suddenly at a turn in the road, as if called up by the wand of a magician, burst on the view an illuminated *château*, every window lighted, and the trees bearing festoons of lamps; it was the more striking as for miles there had scarcely been a single habitation, and immediately after passing it, the scene again relapsed into darkness and solitude. A comparatively modern *château* in France would give an English traveller the idea of ruin, as in England even ruins are kept in the best possible repair, which is, I think, carrying neatness too far."

We will conclude our notice of these daintily-touched little sketches, with the graceful and feeling expressions that close the volume itself; which, though confessedly a slender contribution to literature, will yet, we venture to predict, brighten with pleasant reminiscences many a time-dimmed eye; for our own part, in taking leave of the clever and evidently amiable young authoress, we offer her the hearty thanks of a very old man, whose flagging pulse she has quickened, and whose slackened nerves restrung, with the "sensations of sixteen."

"The late visit of the Queen of England to the *château d'Eu* must have been most gratifying to the King and the Royal Family of France; one of the most delightful circumstances attending that visit, was the interview of two young, accomplished, and beautiful women, both mothers of children destined at a future day, and may it be far distant, to rule over England and France, and who, a short time since, might have been said to rejoice in husbands of their choice, young, handsome, and valiant. Alas! for the poor Duchess of Orleans! May a like affliction never visit our Royal Mistress. I know nothing about politics, but have so often heard with regret of differences between England and France, that the news of the Queen's visit was the more gratifying as likely to cement a good understanding between my native and my adopted country. France is dear to me from having passed in it the happy days of my childhood, in having had a brother born on its soil, in having, even during my short existence, lived to see its capital improve in beauty, extent, and civilisation; and although when I visit my native land, I am lost in wonder and admiration at the magnitude of her metropolis, at her wealth, her commerce, bringing luxuries from every quarter of the globe, at the almost incredible rapidity of her internal intercourse, and the perfection which she has attained in arts and sciences; yet, proud and happy as I feel that I am an Englishwoman, when I return here, it is still with the grateful feeling towards a country in which I have passed happy years and known many kind friends; and I trust the time will never return when the two greatest countries in the world shall relapse into hostilities; after so long a peace, in which ties have been formed by friendship and marriage, England and France armed against each other would present almost the horrors of a civil war.

Fare thee well! ingenious and ingenuous sixteen, and lay up in thy heart the beautiful admonition of Victor Hugo to a little child — "*Devenez grande, et restez sage.*"

GARDEN - FANCIES.

BY ROBERT BROWNING.

1. THE FLOWER'S NAME.

HERE's the garden she walked across,
 Arm in my arm, such a short while since :
 Hark, now I push its wicket, the moss
 Hinders the hinges and makes them wince !
 She must have reached this shrub ere she turned,
 As back with that murmur the wicket swung ;
 For she laid the poor snail, my chance foot spurned,
 To feed and forget it the leaves among.

Down this side of the gravel-walk
 She went while her robe's edge brushed the box :
 And here she paused in her gracious talk
 To point me a moth on the milk-white flox.
 Roses, ranged in valiant row,
 Think will I never she passed you by !
 She loves noble roses, I know ;
 But this—so surely this met her eye !

This flower she stopped at, finger on lip ;
 Stooped over, in doubt, settling its claim,
 Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
 Its soft meandering Spanish name :
 What a name ! Was it love, or praise ?
 Speech half-asleep, or song half-awake ?
 I must learn Spanish one of these days,
 Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

Roses, if I live and do well,
 I may bring her, one of these days,
 To fix you fast with as fine a spell,
 Fit you each with his Spanish phrase !
 But do not detain me now ; for she lingers
 There, like sunshine over the ground,
 And ever I see her soft white fingers
 Searching after the bud she found.

Flower, you Spaniard, look you grow not,
 Stay as you are and be loved for ever !
 Bud, if I kiss you, 'tis that you blow not,
 Mind the pink shut mouth opens never !
 For while it pouts thus, her fingers wrestle,
 Twinkling the audacious leaves between,
 Till round they turn and down they nestle—
 Is not the dear mark still to be seen ?

Where I find her not, beauties vanish ;
 Whither I follow her, beauties flee ;
 Is there no method to tell her in Spanish
 June's twice June since she breathed it with me ?
 Come, bud, show me the least of her traces,
 Tread in my lady's lightest foot-fall
 — Ah, you may flout and turn up your faces !
 Roses, are you so fair after all ?

2. SIBRANDUS SCHAFNABURGENSIS.

Plague take all pedants, say I !
 He who wrote what I hold in my hand,
 Centuries back was so good as to die,
 Leaving this rubbish to bother the land ;
 This, that was a book in its time,
 Printed on paper and bound in leather,
 Last month in the white of a matin-prime
 Just when the birds sang all together.

Into the garden I brought it to read ;
 And under these arbutes and laurustine
 Read it, so help me grace in my need,
 From title-page to closing line.
 Chapter on chapter did I count,
 As a curious traveller counts Stonehenge ;
 Added up the mortal amount ;
 And then proceeded to my revenge.

Yonder's a plum-tree, with a crevice
 An owl would build in, were he but sage ;
 For a lap of moss, like a fine pont-levis
 In a castle of the middle age,
 Joins to a lip of gum, pure amber ;
 When he'd be private, there might he spend
 Hours alone in his lady's chamber :
 Into this crevice I dropped our friend.

Splash, went he, as under he ducked,
 — I knew at the bottom rain-drippings stagnate :
 Next a handful of blossoms I plucked
 To bury him with, my book-shelf's magnate :
 Then I went in-doors, brought out a loaf,
 Half a cheese, and a bottle of Chablis ;
 Lay on the grass and forgot the oaf
 Over a jolly chapter of Rabelais.

Now, this morning, betwixt the moss
 And gum that locked our friend in limbo,
 A spider had spun his web across,
 And sate in the midst with arms a-kimbo :
 So I took pity, for learning's sake,
 And, *de profundis, accentibus lætis*,
Cantate, quoth I, as I got a rake,
 And up I fished his delectable treatise.

Here you have it, dry in the sun,
 With all the binding all of a blister,
 And great blue spots where the ink has run,
 And reddish streaks that wink and glister
 O'er the page so beautifully yellow —
 Oh, the droppings have played their tricks !
 Did he guess how toadstools grow, this fellow ?
 Here's one stuck in his chapter six !

How did he like it when the live creatures
Tickled and toused and browsed him all over,
And worm, slug, eft, with serious features,
Came in, each one, for his right of trover ;
When the water-beetle with great blind deaf face
Made of her eggs the stately deposit,
And the newt borrowed so much of the preface
As tiled in the top of his black wife's closet.

All that life, and fun, and romping,
All that frisking, and twisting, and coupling,
While slowly our poor friend's leaves were swamping,
Clasps cracking, and covers suppling !
As if you had carried sour John Knox
To the play at Paris, Vienna, or Munich,
Fastened him into a front-row box,
And danced off the Ballet in trowsers and tunic.

Come, old martyr ! what, torment enough is it ?
Back to my room shall you take your sweet self !
Good bye, mother-beetle ; husband-*eft*, *sufficit* !
See the snug niche I have made on my shelf.
A's book shall prop you up, B's shall cover you,
Here's C to be grave with, or D to be gay,
And with E on each side, and F right over you,
Dry-rot at ease till the judgment-day !

THE MODERN OTHELLO:

A TALE FOUNDED ON FACTS.

TOWARDS the close of the year 1826, a large house in the Calle San Geronimo, in Madrid, which for a considerable time had remained uninhabited, suddenly became the scene of much bustle and preparation. Doors, shutters, and jalousies, were thrown open, creaking upon their hinges, which had grown rusty from want of use, and a host of painters and decorators were seen busily at work, cleansing the apartments, and fitting them up in the most sumptuous and expensive manner. The walls of the rooms were soon covered with splendid mirrors and admirably-painted frescoes; superb chandeliers hung glittering from the ceiling; and furniture made of the richest silks and most costly foreign woods filled the suites of rooms. In the inner court, or *patio*, the broken and moss-covered flags were replaced by a mosaic pavement of the rarest materials and most ingenious device; the broken pipes and dilapidated stonework of the dried up fountain were removed, and in their place a dolphin, exquisitely carved out of the purest white marble, spouted a gush of sparkling water into the sun-beams. Some boxes of earth, the plants in which had perished or run wild from neglect, disappeared, and rows of huge porcelain jars, containing citron and orange trees, camelias with their wax-like flowers, and exotics of the greatest fragrance and beauty, were ranged in the galleries and around the court.

The cobwebbed and bat-haunted mansion which, under the spell of that great magician, gold, was thus so rapidly transformed into a palace of almost oriental magnificence, had been the property of a nobleman who had made himself conspicuous in the political struggles of 1821, and 1822, and who found himself compelled to fly the country when Ferdinand, by the aid of French bayonets, was restored to absolute power. Before reaching the frontier, however, he fell into the hands of some royalist guerillas and was shot without form of trial. His property was confiscated to the use of the crown, his estate and the furniture of his house at Madrid sold, but for the house itself no purchaser had been found, and for more than three years it remained shut up and neglected. It seemed as if the unhappy fate of its last owner had deterred every body from occupying a mansion which for size and outward appearance was one of the best in Madrid, and the neighbours had become so accustomed to its deserted and gloomy aspect, that they almost began to think that it had acquired a sort of prescriptive right to remain uninhabited, and were proportionably surprised at the preparations now making for the reception of some new proprietor. It soon became known that an Andalusian gentleman of

ancient descent and immense wealth, had purchased the house, and that he intended inhabiting it as soon as it was ready to receive himself and his young and beautiful wife.

Don Mariano Flores was the owner of one of the finest estates in Andalusia, which had been in his family nearly from the day that the Moors were finally driven out of the richest province in the peninsula. Following the example of his ancestors, he was leading the peaceful and happy life of a Spanish country gentleman, when the invasion of Spain by Napoleon's generals rendered person and property insecure. Don Mariano was then about thirty years of age and still unmarried, and feeling no disposition to take a part in the struggle which was commencing, he embarked for the Havannah, where he had some extensive plantations, intending to remain there until things should again become settled in Spain. He remained, however, much longer; busied with the superintendence and improvement of his property; and it was only about eighteen months before the period of this narrative that he landed at Cadiz, after an absence of fifteen years from his native country. During a stay which he made in the last named city, he became acquainted with a widow lady of good family but limited means, who was residing there with her son and daughter. The amiable qualities and agreeable conversation of Doña Olivia Guevara had at first induced Flores to cultivate her acquaintance, but before he had paid many visits to her house it became evident that the point of attraction was changed, and that her beautiful daughter was the magnet which drew him each day to the Casa Guevara.

Doña Lucia was indeed a most enchanting creature, the very perfection of Spanish beauty, but with a share of good sense and accomplishments far larger than is usually found in her countrywomen. She was at this time in her twentieth year, possessing a regular beautiful and expressive countenance, a figure that was the perfection of grace and symmetry, and feet and hands remarkable even in Andalusia, where that class of beauty abounds. The care and instructions that had been lavished on her by her mother had borne good fruit; she was well informed, played admirably on the guitar and piano, painted as few amateurs paint, sang like a nightingale, and danced like a sylph. In short she was the toast of Cadiz, and her admirers were innumerable, but her want of fortune deterred some, while others, who had offered themselves, had been met by a courteous but firm rejection. Her mother, whose health was bad, and who had little to depend on beside her pension as widow of a general officer, was desirous of seeing her daughter married, and frequently expostulated with her on her rejection of suitors apparently unexceptionable. When Flores began to pay her marked attention, Doña Olivia strongly urged her to give a favourable answer to the proposals which he was evidently desirous of making. Lucia's heart was entirely free, and she liked the agreeable conversation and gentlemanly manners of her new suitor. This, added to her strong wish to please her mother, to whom she was devotedly attached, and to an equally strong desire to promote the interests of her twin brother Enrique, which might be greatly advanced by an alliance with a wealthy and influential man, induced her to accept

he proposals which Don Mariano at last found courage to make. He had for a long time been deterred from offering himself, by a doubt, whether happiness could result from a union between a girl at nineteen and a man nearly thirty years her senior, and it was at some sacrifice of reason to passion, that he finally decided upon asking Lucia to become his wife. He had too little vanity, and had seen too much of the world to be blind to the possibility of a husband being accepted for his riches' sake, who, in all other respects, might have been deemed undesirable. The frankness of Lucia's character, however, offered a strong guarantee against this risk, and Flores had every reason to be gratified with the manner in which she accepted him, and with her subsequent deportment. Without affecting feelings which she did not really experience, she allowed him to see that she appreciated his many excellent qualities, and entertained towards him a strong feeling of friendship, which it was by no means impossible might ripen into a warmer sentiment.

On his part, Don Mariano lost no opportunity of proving his affection for his affianced bride. He had heard both her and her mother express anxiety on the subject of young Guevara, who had recently left the university of Salamanca, without, as it appeared, having attained much proficiency in the studies which he had been sent thither to pursue. The young man entertained an invincible repugnance to all professions except that of arms. Commissions in the army were, at that time, given entirely by favour, usually to relatives and adherents of a few influential grandees, and the señora Guevara, in spite of her strong claims as an officer's widow, saw little probability of procuring one for her son. Without apprising any of the family of his intention, Flores wrote to a friend at Madrid, directing him to use all his interest and spare no expence to obtain the desired commission for his future brother-in-law. A fortnight later he surprised and delighted the Guevara family by placing before them a copy of the Gazette, in which was Enrique Guevara's appointment to one of the best cavalry regiments in the Spanish service.

Shortly after this incident, Lucia became the wife of Don Mariano. But few weeks had elapsed after their marriage, when a defect became apparent in the character of the latter, which neither Lucia nor her mother had previously suspected. This defect was one which, however prominent in the Spanish character a century or two ago, when duennas and daggers, midnight serenades and grated windows were the order of the day, has of late years been considerably modified. Jealousy, most causeless and absurd, was the demon which now crossed the path, and threatened to mar the happiness of the newly-married couple. Don Mariano's fears and doubts as to the possibility of his being loved by a young and beautiful woman, had been at first dissipated or forgotten in the joy of finding himself the husband of Lucia. They now, however, revived with redoubled force. He could not persuade himself that Lucia loved him, or did more than tolerate him as a friend and benefactor; and on his part, he could not make up his mind to accept friendship where he had hoped for love. In vain did his wife, when she discovered the cause of his

uneasiness and frequent depression, do all in her power to dissipate the cloud which she saw forming over their happiness. His extreme susceptibility rendered the task an impossible one. The feeling of unfounded, and at first objectless jealousy, increased rather than abated, and to add to Lucia's sorrow, soon became too apparent to be concealed from the most casual observer. Don Mariano felt that he was wrong to entertain such a feeling, but still was totally unable to vanquish it. He was too generous-minded a man to resort to the usual expedients of jealous husbands, and far from attempting to seclude his wife in any degree, he on the contrary encouraged her to go into society, and to accept the numerous invitations to balls and entertainments which were poured upon them by their friends and acquaintances at Cadiz. Yet the time spent at those entertainments were to him so many hours of torture. Amidst the gay cavaliers who thronged around his wife, eager to lead her to the dance, profuse of compliments and lavish of attentions, there was always one or other to whom he fancied she listened with a marked and pleased attention. The slightest smile extorted from her by some absurd compliment or overstrained gallantry, was by his jealous interpretation converted into a symptom of preference, and the extreme degree of reserve and propriety maintained by his wife was insufficient to dispel the phantoms created by his diseased imagination.

Lucia's mother and brother had naturally been amongst the first to observe this unfortunate failing in the character of Don Mariano. The former had even expostulated with him on the subject, setting forth in strong but not exaggerated colours her daughter's propriety of conduct, firm principles, and, above all, her strong attachment to himself. Flores listened patiently, promised to be more reasonable, — and remained as suspicious and unhappy as before. Enrique Guevara could not, of course, presume to reason with his brother-in-law, but the hairbrained and mischief-loving youth did not scruple to banter his sister pretty freely on the subject of Don Mariano's jealousy. A period was at last put to his ill-timed pleasantries by his departure to join his regiment, which was quartered in the province of Valencia.

About a year after her marriage, Lucia surprised her husband by expressing a wish that they should leave Cadiz and take up their residence in the capital. The reason she assigned for this request was the not unnatural one of a desire to partake of the gaieties of Madrid, but her real motive was of a far different nature. She thought it would conduce to Don Mariano's happiness if they left a city where she was in the daily habit of meeting young men who had known her from childhood, and with whom she was on terms of sister-like intimacy which she could not break off without appearing grossly capricious, and doing violence to their feelings and her own. Yet the familiar terms on which she unavoidably was with these persons seemed frequently to pain and annoy Flores; and she thought that in a place where she had as yet no acquaintances, she should be able to avoid all such intimacies. Don Mariano did not penetrate her intention, but eager to gratify her smallest wishes, he immediately sent instructions to Madrid for the purchase and fitting up of a suitable mansion.

It was early in the year 1827 that Flores and his wife arrived in the capital, and took possession of their splendid house in the Calle San Geronimo. Don Mariano had many friends and connections at Madrid, and moreover the fame of the Beauty of Cadiz, *la Bella Gaditana*, as she was called, had preceded her thither, so that within a week after their arrival they had received the visits of a large proportion of the best society in Madrid. It was the gay season of the year; the carnival was about to commence, and balls, operas, ridottos, and amusements of every kind were the order of the day. Lucia found herself unavoidably drawn into the vortex of dissipation, from which she would willingly have kept aloof had not Flores pressed her to accept the invitations of all kinds which they received, and which she had, therefore, no pretext for declining. Her whole thoughts bent on eradicating the feeling of jealous uneasiness which had taken possession of her husband, she did all in her power to avoid attracting notice, but in vain. Even in the brilliant circles of the capital, her beauty drew universal attention, and she had soon the mortification to find that she could not enter a ball-room without being besieged by a host of admiring cavaliers, petitioning for her hand in the dance, and paying her an exaggerated homage sufficient to turn the head of any woman less free from vanity than Doña Lucia. At the same time her object in leaving Cadiz was for the moment attained. Flores seemed at first to look on with indifference while the swarm of glittering admirers fluttered round his wife. It was only when some of them became, almost daily visitors at his house, rode beside Lucia's carriage in the Prado, met her at every ball, and were to be found, in short, wherever she went, showing a punctuality and acquaintance with her movements so great that it almost seemed the result of a system of secret police, that Don Mariano's brow again began to darken and his face to resume its anxious, suspicious expression. This could not escape the affectionate observation of Lucia, and she implored her husband to let her live secluded and quiet, since the gay and bustling life they were then leading was evidently disagreeable to him. Don Mariano denied that it was so, asked her if she wished to make him pass for one of those jealous old husbands who are afraid to allow their young wives to be seen; and refused compliance with her request in a half-jesting half-serious tone which deterred Lucia from insisting any farther.

It was towards the close of the carnival, and the Madrileños seemed determined to make the most of the few days that remained before the arrival of Lent with its fasts and privations. Amongst other fêtes and entertainments that were upon the *tapis*, a masked ball, to be given by the Marquis of Torrejon on the Sunday before Lent, was perhaps the most prominent, and excited the most eager anticipation on the part of the persons invited. The spacious suites of rooms of the marquis's palace afforded admirable facilities for magnificent entertainments of this description, and it was expected that upwards of a thousand persons would be present on the occasion. Don Mariano Flores and his wife were of course among the invited. An elegant Moorish costume had been ordered for Lucia, who had wished Flores

also to assume a disguise, but he had declined doing so, and was to accompany her in plain clothes.

When the evening of the ball arrived, however, Lucia felt unwell, and expressed a wish to remain at home, as the headache of which she complained could not fail to be aggravated by the heat and noise of crowded rooms. Her husband proposed remaining with her, but she urged him strongly to go, saying that it would look like an intentional slight to the marquis, who was a new acquaintance, if both were to stay away. At last Flores reluctantly departed, with the intention of merely showing himself at the ball, and immediately returning home.

The rooms of the Torrejon palace were already thronged with masks when Don Mariano entered them. The usual collection of knights and shepherdesses, flower-girls and harlequins, Turks and troubadours, gipsies, contrabandistas, majos and manolas were there, but besides these there were also many less common-place characters, costumed with elaborate fidelity to the fashions of the times in which the originals had lived, and admirably supported by those who had assumed them. The rooms were draped and tapestried for the occasion, and illuminated by thousands of waxlights; and the whole scene was so gay and brilliant that Don Mariano, who had gone thither as a matter of form, and without expecting amusement, was surprised to find himself taking an interest in the pageant, and listening with a smile to the pleasantries and repartees bandied about amongst the maskers.

After a few turns round the rooms, Flores was standing watching a party of masks dressed as Arragonese peasants, who were executing one of their national dances in a strikingly graceful and characteristic manner, when he felt himself touched slightly upon the shoulder. On looking round, he saw standing behind him a figure attired in a black silk mask and domino, the hood of the latter thrown over its head, so as to obviate any possibility of recognising the wearer.

"*Buenas noches, Otello,*" said the mask, in a feigned voice. "Where have you left your pretty wife?"

The freedom of this question, and the impertinent insinuation conveyed in the *sobriquet* applied to himself, were anything but agreeable to Flores, who, as has already been seen, was of a morbidly susceptible disposition, and at all times ready to exaggerate and misconstrue the slightest word spoken of Doña Lucia. His first impulse was to turn his back upon the unceremonious interrogator and leave the room, but calling to mind the licence of the season, he checked himself, and answered the question by another.

"Have you not wit enough to find the ladies you seek without inquiring of a third person?" he replied.

"Perhaps," said the mask, nodding confidently, "perhaps yes, and perhaps no, Mariano. Or it may be that I could tell even better than yourself, where and how occupied *la Bella Gaditana* now is. What if I had seen her since you have?"

"That were scarce possible," replied Flores, hastily; "for it is little more than an hour since I left her, and then she was indisposed and about to retire to rest."

"Oh, most incautious of all Othellos!" exclaimed the domino, in a tone of grave banter; "most negligent of dragons, revealing the exact position of the treasure you are set to guard; watching over it when no danger is near, absent when the knight is at hand who has sworn to tear it from thy clutches. *Vaya*, Marianito; thou art but a blind buzzard after all. A *marido*, a husband, in the full force of the term."

"And you are a sorry jester, señor Domino," retorted Flores, nettled in spite of himself at the solemn impertinence of the mask. "Carry your buffoonery where it may be more relished."

"Gently, gently, worthy señor Flores," replied the mask; "remember a certain proverb, *chi va piano, va sano*. Why should you be angry with me because I am one of your best friends, and disposed to throw a light upon your domestic history, of which I am grieved to find you are lamentably unconscious."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Flores impatiently.

"Pshaw! if you will, but what if I were to prove to you that within a few minutes after you left your fair lady about to retire to rest, a cavalier, young, and not altogether ill-looking, was admitted to her presence. That he was allowed to kiss — her hand, you think perhaps — not so — her lips. Nay, that she returned his embrace with the utmost ardour and affection, that —"

"Liar and slanderer!" exclaimed the enraged Flores, suddenly starting out of the state of stupefaction into which the bold assertions of the mask had at first plunged him. "Liar! you shall eat your words or prove them."

And he clutched at the domino with one hand, while with the other he attempted to tear off his mask.

"Gently, good Mariano," said the domino, springing back. "I have more to tell, but not till you can hear it more coolly." And gliding behind a group of persons standing near them, he was the next instant lost in the crowd of masks.

Although Flores felt the absurdity of attaching any importance to the random pleasantries of a carnival ball, he was not the less annoyed and angry at what had just passed. He hurried from one room to another in hopes of finding the black domino, with the full intention of making him unmask and calling him to account for his insolence. Black dominos he found by dozens, but not the one he sought. Some were taller, others shorter, and one or two whom he accosted, fully believing he had found the object of his pursuit, burst into a fit of laughter at the angry apostrophe he addressed to them, and replied in a tone or accent which at once convinced him of his mistake. Sensible that his search must be in vain, and was only serving to render him ridiculous, he was about to leave the ball, when at the moment that he found himself in a particularly crowded part of the rooms, something was slipped into his half-closed hand, without his being able to see the person who had given it. It was a twisted paper, which as soon as he could extricate himself from the throng he opened and read. It contained the following words written in pencil: —

"What you have heard is true, but more remains to tell. Would you know all, place yourself at midnight beside the fourth pillar of the great orchestra."

Flores at first felt inclined to disregard this mysterious epistle. His naturally generous disposition made him unwilling to attach importance to anonymous accusations, or attacks that could only be made behind the incognito of a mask. At the same time, the words of the black domino had not been without their effect upon his jealous mind. Without confessing to himself, that he was in the slightest degree swayed by any suspicion of his wife, he finally resolved to go to the place of rendezvous, with the sole intention, as he persuaded himself, of unmasking and punishing the insolent slanderer of Doña Lucia. It wanted but a quarter of an hour to midnight, and making his way slowly through the crowd, he reached the great orchestra, one of three which were that night filled with musicians. The other two orchestras were temporary erections, but this one was in a saloon, in which the Marquis of Torrejon gave frequent concerts, and it was permanent. It was raised about five feet above the floor, supported by pillars, and surrounded by a gilt balustrade. The entrance to it was from the corridor without.

Midnight struck; five, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour elapsed, and no one accosted Don Mariano, who remained leaning against the pillar, chafing inwardly, and furious with himself for having kept the appointment, and thereby, doubtless, rendered himself a laughing stock to one or many of the masks around him, who had probably been informed of the hoax, and were even then enjoying his vexation. The dancing had been interrupted by the performance of some jugglers and fantoccini which was going on in the adjoining apartment, and the orchestra below which Flores was standing was unoccupied, the musicians having gone out to take some refreshment. Suddenly, and at the moment that Don Mariano was about to leave his post, he heard a rustling above his head, and looking up, saw the black domino leaning over the balustrade of the orchestra.

"You are punctual, Othello," said the mask, in the same cool sarcastic tone that had before annoyed Flores.

"Punctual," replied Flores, "not because I attach any importance to what you have told or may tell me, but because such insolence exceeds the licence even of a carnival night. If you are a *Caballero*, as I may presume from finding you here, you will immediately unmask, or at least tell me your name and appoint a time to-morrow to give me satisfaction for the insult you have offered me."

"Neither the one nor the other," was the answer. "We must part without your knowing me otherwise than as the black domino. But I promised you a little information concerning the conduct of *la Bella Gaditana*, and I will keep my word. Do you know this ring, Marianito?" continued the mask, holding out an emerald ring which Flores immediately recognised as belonging to his wife.

"Villain! where got you that?" exclaimed Flores, turning deadly pale, all his jealous suspicions reviving with tenfold violence.

The mask gave a low sarcastic laugh.

"From *her*, Marianito."

Without uttering another word, Flores thrust his hand through the balustrades, and endeavored to seize his tormentor, who by his position in the orchestra had his feet about on a level with Don Mariano's head. The domino stepped back, eluding his grasp with ease.

"One more attempt of that kind and I leave you," said the mask.

Flores saw, in fact, that to escape him, the unknown had only to pass through the open door leading from the orchestra to the corridor without. The sight of his wife's ring had roused his jealousy to the highest pitch, and obliterated all the good resolutions he had made to disregard anonymous accusations. He now thought only of the best means of inducing his informant to tell all he knew. The latter did not leave him long in a state of suspense.

"*Bien*, Mariano," said he, as he saw Flores step a pace or two back from the orchestra, as if to intimate his intention of abstaining from further violence. "Remain quiet, and I will tell you all. The Lothario who causes you so much uneasiness is young, goodlooking, and agreeable. He entered your house five minutes after you left it. Enquire of your servants; they will confirm what I tell you."

"But the ring," exclaimed the unfortunate Flores, his lips white with suppressed fury, his hands clenched till the nails dug into the palms. "How came you by that ring?"

"I took it from the finger on which you have more than once seen it. *Cuidado ! señor*," continued the mask, as Flores made an impetuous movement towards his tormentor. "No nearer, or I am gone. What do you suppose could be my motive for telling you all this, had I not some pet vengeance of my own to accomplish. What if I had been once preferred, but were now capriciously thrown aside to make way for a favoured rival?"

"Proofs! What proofs have you?" gasped Flores, in a voice so hollow and unnatural that the mask seemed to start slightly and hesitate before he replied.

"You would have proofs—What think you of this ring, drawn from her finger?"

"You may have stolen it," replied Flores, in the same hoarse and hollow tone as before.

"Do you recognise this hair?" said the mask, drawing a small gold locket from under his disguise, and holding it out to Don Mariano. "Nay, touch it not. You can look at it in my hands."

"'Tis her's, 'tis her's!" muttered Flores; "I could tell it amongst a thousand, that rich and silky black. But no, no, there may be other hair like her's. — 'Tis no proof—no more than the ring. She may have lost it; or it is stolen—or—"

And the unhappy man trembled and stammered in the agony of his jealousy, striving to persuade himself of the insufficiency of the testimony which to him appeared only too ample and conclusive.

"You are hard to convince, Mariano," said the domino; "but I have yet other evidence, at least as far as I myself am concerned. Hark! a word in your ear."

Flores stepped close up to the orchestra, and the unknown, kneeling down, brought his masked visage within a few inches of Don

Mariano's ear, and spoke a few words in a low, hissing whisper. What those words were was never known but to him who spoke and him who heard them. What seeming proof or voucher of his wife's guilt, the black domino, like another Iago, conveyed to Flores in that whisper, none can tell. Its purport can only be conjectured from the effect it produced upon the unhappy hearer, who started back as though a knife had been driven into him, and uttered a cry so wild and shrill that it was heard through the whole suite of apartments. Then with a spring like that of a tiger, he caught hold of the top of the balustrade, which was nearly eight feet from the ground, and in an instant swung himself into the orchestra. The domino, as soon as he had said the words which wrought so fearful an effect on Don Mariano, had darted through the small door leading into the corridor, and shut and bolted it behind him. The fastening, however, was too frail to withstand the violence with which Flores hurled himself against it, and in an instant he stood in the passage without. But the domino had disappeared, nor did his pursuer take much trouble to seek him. The direction of Don Mariano's fury seemed suddenly to change, and a new and more worthy object of revenge to occur to him. Rushing along the corridors and galleries, he sprang down the stairs, burst through the group of startled and staring domestics collected in the hall, and darted out of the palace. Forgetting his carriage, which was waiting for him, he flew through the streets, bareheaded and panting, relaxing nothing of his desperate speed till he reached his house in the Calle San Geronimo. The porter who hurried to answer his furious summons, stood aghast on beholding his master rush past him, hatless, his ball dress splashed and soiled by the mud of the streets, his features pale as death and distorted by the violent conflict that was raging within him. Before he had crossed the hall, he hurried back, and grasping the man by the collar—

"Has any one been here to-night?" he demanded.

"Yes — No — Señor," stammered the terrified domestic.

"Scoundrel!" vociferated Don Mariano, shaking the man violently. "Have *you* been taught your lesson? Answer me, who has been here?"

"An officer," replied the servant, half choked by his master's violence.

Without staying to hear more, Don Mariano darted up the marble staircase, along the carpeted gallery, and through a suite of rooms that led to his wife's apartments. He paused but for an instant in a chamber, on the wall of which a number of weapons of various descriptions were fantastically arranged in the manner of a trophy. From amongst jewel-hilted scimitars, Toledo swords, and richly inlaid pistols, Don Mariano snatched a dagger of the well-tempered steel of Albacete, a short, keen, double-edged blade, that flashed as he drew it from its sheath. The next instant he entered his wife's apartment.

Behind the half-drawn curtains of dark crimson velvet that surrounded her couch, Doña Lucia lay sleeping, her beautiful head supported by one of her exquisitely formed arms, her abundant black

resses, which had escaped from the silken kerchief that bound them, streaming over the snow white pillow. The mellow light of a painted lamp suspended from the ceiling fell upon her delicately chiselled features, placid and calm in sleep as those of an infant. It seemed impossible to gaze on that face and entertain a moment's doubt of its owner's spotless purity. But Don Mariano gave himself no time for such reflections. With a face like marble, and teeth fiercely clenched, the deadly weapon with which he had armed himself clutched firmly in his right hand, he stepped into the alcove in which Lucia was sleeping, and drew the curtain partially behind him. There was a moment's dead silence; then a stifled cry and a deep drawn sob, and Flores reappeared, the furies of hell, jealousy, revenge, and — already — remorse, written upon his face. There was a stain of blood on his right hand, and flecks of the same sanguine hue on his distorted ashy-pale countenance. At that instant hasty steps were heard in the adjoining apartment, the door of the room was thrown violently open, and the black domino stood before him.

"Where is Lucia?" exclaimed the mask, in a hurried and anxious voice.

Instead of replying, Flores sprang upon the new comer with a shout, or rather shriek, that resembled no earthly sound. But before he reached him, the mysterious domino tore off his mask, and with a moan of agony and despair, Don Mariano fell senseless to the ground. The features revealed were those of Lucia's brother.

But a short explanatory epilogue is necessary to this sad tragedy. Scarcely had Flores left his house to go to the ball at the Marquis of Torrejon's, when Enrique Guevara arrived, having obtained a leave of absence, of which he profited, to visit Madrid. No sooner did he hear that his brother-in-law was gone alone to a masquerade, than it occurred to him to follow him thither and torment him on the subject of his jealousy. Of the latter part of his project he said nothing to his sister, who, on his expressing a wish to go to the ball, gave him the card with the Marquis's crest and initials on it, which was to have served for her own admission. Enrique had combined his mischievous plan in a moment, and seeing several of his sister's rings lying on the table, he took one of them, which he thought would be useful to assist in mystifying Flores. The locket containing Lucia's hair was a childish token of affection that he had had several years in his possession, and was in the habit of wearing suspended round his neck.

Scarcely, however, had he played off the joke that was to produce such fatal results, when he became alarmed at what he had done, remembering the wild look and violent agitation with which Flores had received what he considered the proofs of his wife's faithlessness. Don Mariano's strange demeanour and the disordered state in which he had left the ball, had attracted attention, and were the theme of many conjectures. Terrified for the consequences of his folly, Enrique Guevara jumped into a carriage and drove rapidly to the Calle San Geronimo, but, with all the haste he made, he was too late to prevent the sad catastrophe of which his habitual indulgence in practical jokes was the immediate cause.

As recently as the year 1835, a small country house within a few miles of Madrid was inhabited by three persons, a lunatic and his two attendants. The former might frequently be seen, during the more tranquil periods of his malady, walking feebly up and down the gardens belonging to the house, accompanied by his keepers. Those of the inhabitants of Madrid who occasionally took their afternoon's ride or drive in that direction, gazed at him with compassion and curiosity, and the stranger who perchance enquired his name, was informed that it was Don Mariano Flores, surnamed the Modern Othello.



"LET CROWDED CITIES AND EXTENSIVE TOWNS
SINK INTO HAMLETS AND UNPEOPLED DOWNS."

Men and Manners.

THE COMMEMORATION.

By SUUM CUIQUE, Esq.

"Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
Pulsanda *Townhall*; nunc *elegantioribus*,
Ornare *the tables of college*
Tempus erat, *sprecadibus*, sodales."

HORATIUS ALTERATUS.

CHAPTER I.

"WELL, I declare I am almost as wearied with telling you my tales," said TOM, "as I am at Commemoration time, when my clapper is going from morning until night, or, more poetically,

'From sunny morn to dewy eve.'

"Commemoration! what is that?" I enquired.

"The annual meeting when the Professor of Oratory, the Public Orator as he is called, makes a very intelligible Latin speech to the ladies, God bless them! and to country gentlemen, on the merits and virtues of those antients who, from the best of motives, no doubt, founded colleges, endowed fellowships, and bequeathed livings and libraries for the promotion of literature and the comfort of learned men. It is also called the *Encania*."

"*Encania*? why that is the name of a Jewish festival — the celebration of the building of the Temple. How does it apply to a Christian ceremony?"

"Never you mind about that; we call it by that name in Oxford, from Vice-Chancellor to Poker-Bearer, so it must be right; — *humanum est errare* does not apply to Oxford when classicality is in question."

"Nor to our sister, Cambridge, I presume, when anything mathematical is on the *tapis*."

"Of course not; neither of us can be *radically* wrong, for we spend our days in digging for Latin and Greek roots; they theirs in searching for the roots of cubes and all sorts of figures."

"It must be a most solemn and serious sight, this Commemoration," said I. "In raking up the *manes* of so many pious and charitable individuals the minds of all must be——"

"Ah! ah! ah!" burst out GREAT TOM. "Bless your ignorant freshness! Gloomy! Serious! Stuff! The Commemoration week is the jolliest in all the year. Such a crowd of lions and lionesses, with their cubs and ——"

"Oh! I suppose Wombwell comes down with his exhibition at that time. It must be a good speculation," said I.

Tom laughed in a succession of *bom, bom, boms*, which fairly shook his tower, and made me tremble for the stability of the beam above him.

"You are *very* green, indeed," said he, "not to know that, in Oxford, lions and lionesses mean masculine and feminine strangers, and cubs, their little dears of both sexes, whom they bring up with them to see their brothers and the nice young men at college. If you have such a thing as a maiden aunt, a sister, or a cousin, mind and invite her to see you next June. You cannot please her more. What with balls, concerts, archery, and Latin speeches, boat-racing, champaging, and Blenheim and Nunchamizing, their days and nights fly like the champagne corks, and their spirits flow like the ale barrels in the college butteries."

"It must be very jolly, but rather expensive, I fear," said I.

"You an undergraduate, and talk of the expense of any thing! Pooh! Tell them to put it down in the bill, and think of the amount when you have taken your degree. If you should not happen to think of it then, your purveyors will not fail to remind you of it. Like me, your tradesman can't go on ticking for ever without being wound up. Just lie still, and I will give you a notion of some of the fun of a Commemoration."

CHAPTER II.

WE had two very lively brothers up here at the same time once, who were very great favourites with every body, from the Dean to the school-boys. They were full of fun, and always laughing themselves, or causing others to laugh; it was impossible to be dull in their company, for what with jokes and frolics and harmless mischief, for they had no real vice about them, they afforded every one a fund of amusement.

Their name was Leech, and how to distinguish the two when speaking of them afforded some little difficulty. Leech senior and Leech junior was too formal; old Leech and young Leech not appropriate, for each of them appeared to be of exactly the same age as the other. As to their Christian names, the elder was called Horatio, and the younger Cicero, through the excessive classicality of their governor, and it was impossible to find the *short* for either of them, and to call them by their full length would not have been familiar enough. Altogether it was a knot difficult to be untied, until one of our men, looking to the propensities of the pair—the elder being addicted to horses, and the younger to agricultural pursuits—nick-named them Horse-Leech and Cow-Leech, and by those names, degrading as they appeared at first, they were ever after known. It was some little time before they knew of the method by which they were distinguished; and when they were informed of it by what Sheridan calls a "*d—d* good-natured friend," they were a little indignant,

and felt inclined to resent the affront ; but their good nature got the better of their resentment, and they burst out laughing, declaring the notion was not a bad one, and that they would pardon the impudence of their nick-namer, "for the fun of the thing."

We all of us have our little peculiarities, and no wonder, therefore, that the Leeches had theirs. Horatio, or Horse-Leech, as I have said, was very fond of horses, but although he was almost always with his own horses, or viewing the steeds of other men, he was not one of that kind of men who spend their lives in a stable, and in converse with grooms and stack-men. He was never seen sitting on a corn-bin, smoking cigars and drinking beer with the helpers ; nor was he the familiar associate of coachmen and post-boys. He admired a good team of horses as much as any one, and felt a great respect for a man who could drive them as they should be driven ; and although he preferred the box-seat upon a coach, and ever and anon handled the ribbons, and discoursed on the qualities of the leaders and wheelers, and even entertained the driver with a glass or two of Sherry on a journey, he never forgot that he was a gentleman, and the man by his side, though a skilful driver, nothing but a mere driver—waggoner, is, I believe, the more fashionable name.

He never dealt with a dealer himself, but when he had inspected his stables, and demanded the price of any nag that took his fancy, he entered his name and colour, with his price, in his pocket-book, and left it to his groom to complete or resign the purchase of it. So cool, indeed, was his manner towards the impudent set who were accustomed to treat many gentlemen as their equals, and who really felt it a kind of compliment to be looked upon in that light, that he was known in all the best stable-yards in Oxford by the title of "the reserved swell, as could only purchase by proxy." His judgment, however, was so good, and his liberality so notorious, that his appearance after a horse-fair was always hailed with pleasure.

The peculiar pursuit of the younger brother, Cow-Leech, was, as I have said, agriculture. He was almost mad on the subject. He would ride miles to see a ploughing-match or a cattle show, and looked upon the best ploughman and the best fatter of beasts upon the paternal estate as somebody whose acquaintance was worth cultivating. When at home, he was up with that early riser the lark, and was seldom seen within doors during the day. His old pony, with a sort of wallet slung to the saddle-flaps, might be seen tied to a gate, or wandering and plucking the herbage at his leisure in some green lane, while its master was tossing the grass about in the hay season, or helping to pitch corn in the harvest-time, with a crowd of labourers round him, chatting freely with him, and laughing at his "quips and cranks," merry jokes and comic stories, as if they were not mere serfs of the soil. Yet Cicero was the master and the gentleman with them. He never heard a rude remark, a vulgar expression, or an oath uttered in his presence. Every labourer felt that he was in the presence of a superior as well as a friend. They toiled harder than they would have done for any other master, and sought no extra reward for their exertions but his approbation and an occasional

supply from the well-filled casks of the Grange cellars, when they had earned the indulgence by a day of excessive toil. They were paid no more wages than they would have been paid by a renting-farmer, though they worked much harder ; and yet, out of the numerous ricks and corn-stacks that stood on the various farms upon Colyton Grange, not one had ever been fired, although some of the neighbouring farms had not escaped the visits of incendiaries.

The old Squire was rather a curious character. He had been an Eton boy and an Oxford man. At school he was notorious for an inability to do a copy of Latin verses without filling up a long line, if he wanted an ending to it, with *Proh ! Jupiter inquit*. As he introduced this, his favourite phrase, into sacred as well as profane subjects, it got him into several birchical scrapes, and procured him the *sobriquet* of Jupiter Leech, which, of course, adhered to him after he entered at Oxford.

At the University, from his ill-success, probably, at school, he felt no ambition to shine as a classical constellation. He hated the classics, if the truth must be told, and in order to amuse himself, began to cultivate the science of natural philosophy. Great was the dismay of the learned professor of that science, when he issued his terminal notice of a lecture, and found it answered by a would-be pupil. His office had hitherto been a sinecure, but now he must read up and give a lecture. He wisely selected the most abstruse subject he could think of, and treated it still more abstrusely. The *ruse* had the desired effect. The pupil was so utterly confounded by the string of long and hard words with which the lecture was loaded, that he begged leave to withdraw his name from the class ; — he had no taste for the pursuit of knowledge, under difficulties so great as were placed before him by the erudite lecturer, but contented himself with reading and experimentalising in his own rooms, greatly to the detriment of the furniture, which was not improved by the apartment being converted into a laboratory. He wrote several very elaborate treatises on pneumatics, electricity, chemistry, and galvanism — for he did not confine himself to any particular branch of science — and sent them to the best-conducted journals of the day : but whether he wrote badly or did not throw any fresh light upon his subject, or was too little known in scientific circles to insure a reception, I cannot say ; I can only assert, that of his numerous contributions, not one appeared in print until he condescended to send a paper to a newly-born, cheap, weekly chronicle, treating on “science made easy to the meanest capacities ;” wherein he learnedly discussed “the causes of the appearance of duck-weed on the surface of ponds and ditches.”

So delighted was the Squire with the kindness of the editor in inserting this article, and so pleased at seeing himself in Bourgeois type, that he bought 100 copies of No. 1. and went to a great expense in sending them off by post to all his acquaintances ; and a great deal of trouble in writing letters to assure them that the paper signed Investigator was *his*. Even in after life, a copy of this No. 1. always occupied a conspicuous place on the book-table, and any one who wished to be invited to stop and dine at Colyton Grange had

only to take it up and appear to be absorbed by the paper signed Investigator to ensure his wishes being fulfilled.

The Squire did not go up for a degree, or even for his responsions, but as his father died early he left college, married a neighbouring lady, and settled down quietly at the Grange, where he would have pursued practically those studies which his lady, dreading the effects of acids and alkalis upon carpets and curtains, and the fumes of gases on her husband's constitution, compelled him to attend to only in theory. He amused himself very harmlessly, in keeping tables of the weather; the rises and falls of the thermometer and barometer; wrote several profound treatises on meteorology, which were not inserted in the journals to which they were sent, and spent all his leisure time in trying to get himself made a fellow of some scientific society; but as he went to work to effect his object in a fair, straight-forward way, he did not succeed.

As he was a good master, a kind neighbour, and never acted as a justice of the peace, although he was enrolled in the list of his county, he was very much beloved, and in spite of his eccentricities and very prosy lectures after dinner, Colyton Grange was seldom without a succession of visitors.

The Squiress was a placid calm country lady, who acted the hospitable hostess and the Lady Bountiful to the satisfaction of high and low, rich and poor; and, as long as every thing was neat and tidy about her, and her servants were attentive to their duties and cleanly in their habits and personal appearance, and the poor, who were the objects of her benevolence, were respectful in their demeanour and attended their parish church regularly, cared not a dump for what was going on in the other parts of the world. Her family was reduced by deaths, at different periods, to the two boys, Horatio and Cicero; and, of course, she believed them to be the very models of adolescence.

There was another member of the family whom I must introduce, as he will appear upon my stage hereafter. This was a brother of the Squire's known to every body in the Grange, and without it, as Uncle Tom. No one ever spoke of him or called him by any other name. If he had been saluted as Mr. Thomas Leech, I doubt whether he would have known if he were the person addressed.

He was an odd-looking man, for his mouth was a little out of the horizontal, and he squinted with one eye, which did not turn inwardly over his nose, but outwardly over his right shoulder. He was conscious of this defect in the arrangement of his optics, and to hide it he had a trick, if he was speaking to any one, of throwing his head over his right shoulder, the side on which the queer eye was situated, and looking with the one good eye at the person whom he addressed.

He had been brought up at Eton with his brother, but refused to go to college, as he preferred staying at home and looking over the farms, and more especially the garden, of which he was very fond, and really understood the cultivation. He had his peculiarity, and it was this, — he could not bear the presence of any woman, except

his sister-in-law. It was said that he had made violent love to a lady in his early days, and had been jilted by her for a recruiting sergeant, who, like Mr. Patrick Carey, had the outward essentials of manhood more fully developed than Uncle Tom, who was slight and slender and rather effeminate in appearance. This feeling caused him to absent himself from his brother's table whenever female visitors were at the Grange, and as that occurred frequently he was rarely a guest at the dinner-table.

Uncle Tom was of great service to his philosophic brother, for when the boys were away from home he took upon himself the management of the stud and the overlooking of the farms, and received all the rents, and paid all the bills. This, too, he did in so business-like a way that no lawyer was needed to manage affairs at Colyton Grange. He had a fortune independent of his brother, which he nursed with the greatest care, meaning to bestow it in equal portions on his nephews at his decease, provided they married parties whom he might deem eligible partners, and not likely to jilt them.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING thus introduced some of my chief *dramatis personæ* as briefly as I well could, to make the little events I am about to record understandable, the reader will oblige me by fancying himself in the breakfast parlour at Colyton Grange, on the morning of a very fine day in the beginning of June. The Squire and his lady are *vis-à-vis*, and Uncle Tom between them in his usual fustian shooting coat, cord-shorts and long leather gaiters. Two ladies are visiting at the Grange, but as Uncle Tom knows that they have their coffee and rolls taken up to them in their dressing-rooms, he has ventured in to breakfast: in the midst of the repast, the letter bag is brought in, and the Squire, with great ceremony, selects a key from the bunch of seals, rings and keys attached to his watch chain, and opens it; he performs the operation rather nervously, for he hopes that it may contain an announcement that he has been elected an F. R. S., or that his paper On the Prevalence of Gossamers in Nut-tree Covers in the Months of September and October has been accepted by the scientific periodical to which he has sent it for the fifth time. Uncle Tom, who never expects a letter from any body, goes on quietly with his rasher, and Mrs. Leech amuses herself by looking at her list, to see what number of poor widows, bed-ridden old men, and young labourers' wives in interesting conditions, she is to send those little comforts which make life something more than bearable.

"Bless me! it's very odd! unaccountably so! No letter from the society! no notice of my paper!" said the Squire, laying a letter, a note, and a newspaper aside as if valueless.

"You've said so every day for these twelve years," said Uncle Tom, looking at his sister-in-law, but looking as if he was looking at her husband.

"Never mind, my dear, leave the F. R. S.'s to themselves, and as

to your paper, write another, it will amuse you, and do quite as much good as if it was printed," said the lady.

"It's very odd! unaccountably odd, marm! that you have made that same observation every morning for many years, — vary it, marm, vary it," said the Squire, slowly removing his spectacles, pulling his chair up to the table and going on with his meal.

"That's a hand I ought to know," said Uncle Tom, putting the letter upon the point of his right shoulder to get a clear view of the direction. Why it is from Horatio, and bears the Oxford post-mark."

"Give it to me, Tommy, give it to me," said the lady. "The dear boy how clear he writes!"

"Only a little request for money, I dare say, to pay off the terminal ticks, I'll be bound, said the Squire; "but read it, marm, read it, it is very odd, unaccountably odd, that you women never will open a letter until you have read the direction ten times over, and examined the seal to the post-mark as if you had never seen them before."

Mrs. Leech did what her husband called so "unaccountably odd" very deliberately, and then still more deliberately went to her work-table and looked for a pair of scissors to cut the paper round the seal, for fear of tearing away some valuable portion of the written interior; Uncle Tom eyeing her all the while, although he seemed to be looking in a contrary direction.

"It is very odd, unaccountably odd, that you will not read that letter aloud, marm."

"Oh, it is merely to say they break up —"

"Go down, marm; they never *break-up* after they leave school."

"Well; go down on the 15th — that they want you to send a cheque for 250*l.*, and that they are to have a grand Commemoration this year, and a great many grand folks are to be honoured with degrees. There is a list of names, but I don't know any of them; and then there is a lot of inquiries about the colts and fillies from Horatio; and a postscript from Cicero, full of questions about the crops, the wool, and the next ploughing-match, — that is all."

"It is very odd, unaccountably odd, marm, that you cannot either read my boy's letter yourself, or let me read it," said the Squire.

"Or me, marm," said Uncle Tom, "you know *I* must answer it."

"Well, there it is, read it while I go and see that old Richard has the village basket properly filled," said the lady, handing the letter to her husband, who had it quietly taken out of his hand by Uncle Tommy before she could make her exit.

Uncle Tommy put the letter upon his right shoulder and read it aloud. There was nothing in it that had not been alluded to in the brief summary of its contents by the Squiress; but a name had reached the Squire's ear, when the list of those who were to have honorary degrees conferred upon them was read, that engaged his most serious attention.

"It is very odd, unaccountably odd, but I think, Tommy, you said

that the Baron Von Inkstandhausen of Heidelberg is to receive an honorary D.C.L.?"

"To be sure, — who is he?"

"It is very odd, unaccountably odd, how very ignorant you are, brother Tom, on subjects connected with science! The Baron Von Inkstandhausen is a great natural philosopher, and has made his name illustrious from discovering the anatomical cause of the wonderful agility and powers of jumping possessed by that curious little insect the flea."

"What, is he the man who goes about with industrious fleas?" asked Uncle Tom.

"Very odd, unaccountably odd! Such ignorance; but then it's excusable in a man who despises science, and sticks to the stable and the farm-yard. The Baron Von Inkstandhausen is a man whose acquaintance I, in common with all scientific men, would give worlds to obtain."

"Then why do you not go up to Oxford and get introduced to him? I dare say he would give you his most intimate friendship for a good dinner and the run of the wine-bin; you can take a jar of pickled cabbage in your pocket and call it *saur-kraut*, and if that don't *clench* your acquaintance with him I do not know what will."

The Squire frowned at Uncle Tom, and said it was unaccountably odd that he should entertain such degrading ideas of a German philosopher. He added, much to Uncle Tom's surprise, that he should take his advice for once, and go up to Oxford for the purpose of renewing his acquaintance with some old friends, and being properly introduced by the Professor of Chemistry to the Baron Von Inkstandhausen.

"Then I must go with you," said Uncle Tom, "for you know so little of what you call mere mundane affairs that you will be cheated by every post-boy and turnpike-keeper on the road."

"Go with me! of course you will; do you think I could travel without you? It is very odd, unaccountably odd, that you should dream of such a thing! We will post up, so order the chariot and every thing to be ready by the 13th. I must prepare a few things to take up with me to amuse the boys and their friends."

Uncle Tom *slewed* his eye round over his shoulder, and threw a look of inquiry into it; but, as he seemed to be looking at the peacock on the terrace wall, the Squire did not reply to it, but retired to his study to commence his preparations. Mrs. Leech, who, in spite of her husband's complaint, that "it was very odd, unaccountably odd, that she would interrupt him in his studies," went into the room every hour to see that he was not mixing acids and alkalies, analysing earths, and making combustibles, wondered what he was about to do with several queer-looking machines, the names and uses of which she knew not, and which he was diligently engaged in packing into as small a space as possible. When she heard that he was going up to Oxford to the Commemoration, she thought that he was going to sell some of his useless machinery to some erudite individuals in that learned University who would be able to turn it to a better account than he had done, and was highly pleased; so she did not interrupt

him any more, but amused herself with seeing that every thing he would want, and many things that he would not want, were properly prepared for the journey.

Uncle Tom considerably thought that the boys would like to be apprised of their father's intention of paying them a visit, as he knew that many little arrangements would require to be made in their rooms to render them in a fit state to be visited by the governor; he therefore sat down, and in a very odd position, for he was obliged to look sideways at the paper before him, much as a duck does when he is eyeing a worm at the bottom of a deep ditch. He wrote the following characteristic letter, in which he enclosed a cheque for 300*l*.

"MY DEAR BOYS,

"Colyton Grange,
"June 10th.

"Brother and I dine with you on the 13th, at half-past 5 precise. Mother stays at home. Procure beds handy, and not at an inn, as they are apt to be *one-horse-chaisey*! Hem! You know what I mean — hate bugs and humbugs. Enclosed is cheque for 300*l*. No ticks or antics while the governor is in view, eh? Horatio; all the horses are well, and the fillies and colts going on famously. Cicero; the wheats are in bloom, the beans in pod, and the pease fit for packing. The clovers run short, but the stock are all well, and so are the labourers. More, both of you, when we meet.

"Your affectionate uncle,

"TOM.

"P.S. Brother is packing up some of his queer traps, to astonish a Baron — Von Inkstandhausen by name. If you know him, ask him to dinner, and be sure give him some pickled cabbage — he's a German."

Having completed and sealed this epistle, Uncle Tom set about ordering the chariot and post-horses to be ready early on the morning of the 13th, and then went round the stables and farms to give such directions as he thought would ensure the comforts of the animals, and the proper progress in farming operations during his short absence.

CHAPTER IV.

THE brothers were breakfasting together in the rooms of the elder Horatio, and were violently engaged in getting up a Greek play for their collections, amidst coffee, rolls, and strawberries, when the letter from Uncle Tom arrived. Horatio laughed heartily when he had read it, and handed it to his brother, who joined him in the laugh at first, and then suddenly stopped and looked serious.

"The idea of the Governor and Uncle Tom coming up!" said Horatio.

"And the notion of asking an unknown German quack to dinner, and entertaining him with pickled cabbage!" said Cicero. "Can't we put them off? for you know that we have invited a lot of men—the racing crew, and the crew of the *Torpids*, to supper on the 13th."

"No; it will not do. Besides, what does it matter? Uncle Tom is a regular brick, and will enjoy the fun, and I do not think that the Governor will dislike it. We will get the German, if he is presentable, and can find any one to introduce us to him. He, I hope, will not find fault with the hock."

"If he does not like it, he can send us over an aume, if he pleases, ready for his next visit," said Cicero; "but it strikes me that it will be as well to send for the upholsterer to put our rooms a little in order before the arrival of papa, eh?"

"Oh, nonsense! He knows what college is, and I see nothing he can object to or complain about here."

"Why I do not think a sofa with a loose back and three legs, or a reading-chair with one arm amputated, and a set of rickety dining-tables, at all desirable; and I do think that if the meerschaums, boxing-gloves, tandem-whips and bridles, were taken down from their nails, the rooms would look a little less like a pawnbroker's shop," said Cicero.

"Yes, true enough; and Uncle Tom would rather be displeased than not, at the sight of your collection of operatic and theatrical female favourites; so you must down with them, and replace them with something wherewith his modesty will not be shocked."

"And that Venus must be dressed or discarded, that is very certain; and mistress Psyche would look all the better if she were clad in a decent garb; but we will send for old Scraper the furniture man, and give him orders to settle the rooms soberly and snugly. Now let us knock off the last 500 lines of *Madame Meden*, and then go and get lodgings for our visitors."

The play was finished, and the lodgings—two good bed-rooms at Adams's, the boatman, opposite my tower—engaged before twelve o'clock. The cook was ordered to prepare a good dinner in their rooms on the 13th, for which leave was easily obtained from the Dean, when the visit of Leech *père*, with his brother, was made known to him. As both the Squire and Uncle Tom were fond of port wine, the afternoon was pleasantly spent in tasting the best that Syms and all the other wine-merchants could produce.

Now tasting wine in hot weather is very agreeable, but rather dangerous, as, instead of performing the operation in the scientific method adopted by the trade, the thirst occasioned by the thermometer at 80° is apt to induce one to swallow the contents of the glasses submitted to us for our approbation. The brothers, who were generally very moderate in their potations, were the least in the world overcome by the number of wines they had tasted; and when they had decided upon the style of wine best suited to the governor's taste—full-flavoured, oleaginous, yet leaving a delicious roughness upon the palate instead of the nauseating sugar-sweetness which spoils the

ports of modern days—they issued from the cellars with rather unsteady steps and flushed countenances.

"We are too late for hall-dinner, *per Jovem*," said Horatio, looking up at Carfax clock.

"So we are. Well, never mind," said Cicero, "let us have a lamb-chop at the Star; the cook there has a proper notion of his art."

A few minutes found them in the coffee-room of that, then, well-frequented hotel. Several men were dining there; but the moment they had eaten their chops they took up their caps and gowns, and went off to some friend's rooms to wine.

When Horatio and Cicero Leech had finished their cheese, and ordered a bottle of cool claret, there was but one individual besides themselves left in the room; and a very odd-looking individual he was. He wore a lankey, yellow-tinged pair of mustachoes, with whiskers completely covering his chin, to correspond; his hair was parted in the centre and combed down straight over the collar of his coat; his deeply-seated blue eyes were covered with a large pair of tortoise-shell-mounted spectacles, and his nose was begrimed with yellow snuff, which he was perpetually employed in taking from a large jewelled silver box. He was dressed in long-waisted, dark-green frock-coat, drab trousers, and very square-toed boots. He had finished his dinner, and was sipping some Rhenish wine. By his side lay a large handsome *écume-de-mer* pipe, and a bladder containing tobacco, which he had pushed on one side when the waiter assured him that no smoking was allowed in the coffee-room.

"What a guy!" said Horatio, not quite *sotto voce*.

"A regular quiz, *et nullus error!*" said Cicero.

"Let us drink his very particular salubrity. He is a foreigner, and don't understand English, I dare say, so we ought to be civil to him. Here goes, old fellow!—here's to all friends over the Herring Pond," said Horatio.

"Your jolly health! old gentleman," added Cicero.

Now, as both of them, in tossing off their bumpers, did so in a peculiar way, although they were not aware of it, the stranger smiled a joyous smile, filled his tumbler—for he despised a diminutive wine-glass,—and made the same sort of motion with his hand ere he emptied it. He then left his seat, brought his bottle and tumbler with him, and, placing himself at the brothers' table, seized their right hands successively, and gave them such a severe grip as made them glad when the operation was over.

"I am delight to find two proders: we shall unite and enjoy ourselves more as if we was strangers," said the foreigner.

"How the deuce could he know we were brothers?" whispered Horatio.

"By a family likeness, I suppose. But let us draw him out, and get some fun out of him," said Cicero.

"Beautiful box that, sir," said Horatio.

"Ya, ya, yash, de pox is a peautiful pox, and was given to me py my var good vriend de Brince, when I bresented to him a copy of ma pook."

"Oh, you're an author, are you?" asked Cicero.

"Ya, ya, yash; I have bublish mosh."

"On what subject, may I ask?"

"Oh, I write mosh—vare mosh; put brincipally on de insect and de worm—what you shall call de natural history," said the stranger.

"I say, Cicero, I'll venture a pony that this is the very German whom the Governor is coming up to be introduced to."

"Gad! if so, we're in luck. Sound him!"

"Sound him! I'll ask him at once. Have I the honour of speaking to the Baron —?"

"Ya, ya, yash, I am de Paron, ma young vriends and proders."

"The Baron Von Inkstandhausen?" said Cicero.

"What is dat? Bronounce him again."

"The Baron Von Inkstandhausen," said Horatio, slowly and plainly.

"Ya, ya, yash; dat is how I am call; put you bronounce him so English-like, I not know him at first."

"My dear sir, I am delighted to see you. My father, Mr. Leech of Colyton Grange, in Northamptonshire, is coming up to-morrow on purpose to make your acquaintance. He is fond of science, thinks himself a great natural philosopher, and has written a great deal on the subject, though he has only published one paper—'On the Cause of Duck-weed in Ponds and Ditches.' Did you ever meet with it?"

"Ma dare young vriend, I nevere travel widout it, it is so vare clevere," said the Baron, taking a larger pinch than usual. "I shall mosh like to be known to your Bappa."

"Well, then, you must come and dine with him at my rooms to-morrow, at half-past five," said Horatio, handing the Baron his card.

"Come and breakfast, and spend the day," said Cicero. "We'll lionize you!"

"Ma coot vriends, you overbower me. Put I nevere preak ma fast—nevere; I only take de bipe and de coffee in ma ped. I will have great bleasure in making de acquaintance of your excellent bappa at de dinner," said the Baron. "And now, as we are broders, I shall order some wine of a petter quality, and we shall drink at ma exbense."

The Baron rang the bell, and ordered in half-a-dozen of Rudesheimer in ice, and the party spent a most agreeable evening; the young men assuring one another, as they went to their rooms, not at all the worse for the cool light wine they had been drinking, that they had never met with a more agreeable and accomplished man than the Baron in their lives.

"Very gentlemanly, too, of him to pay for the wine," said Cicero—"very indeed!"

CHAPTER V.

PRECISELY at a quarter-past five on the Tuesday, the day before the Commemoration, amidst the number of carriages that arrived in Oxford, the chariot from Colton Grange might have been seen pulling

up at my tower gateway. Cicero was standing ready to receive his father and uncle, while Horatio was busily employed in decanting the wine. A few minutes sufficed for the Squire and Uncle Tom to dress for dinner ; and as soon as they had reached the young men's rooms, the Baron Von Inkstandhausen arrived, very superbly dressed, and was introduced in due form to Squire Leech, who nervously grasped his hand, and expressed himself as too highly honoured by the condescension of so great a man. Uncle Tom threw a look at the Baron over his right shoulder, and whispered to Horatio that "he wanted trimming about the muzzle, and his mane pulled and combed."

The dinner was excellent, and every one did justice to it ; but no one came near the Baron, who, although there was no pickled cabbage provided, ate enormously, and apologised for it by saying, "he had noting all day before put his bipes."

When the wine and dessert were placed on the table, and the servants had retired, the Squire filled a bumper, and proposed — "The scientific world ; more particularly the gentleman who had honoured them with his company that day." It was drunk with enthusiasm by all, and in *iusdem verbis*, except by Uncle Tom, who had a bad memory for words, and took off his bumper to "the aforesaid."

The Baron bowed, with his right hand—covered with rings and rather dirty about the nails—upon his left breast, and seizing upon a tumbler, which was placed near the water-jug in the centre of the table, filled it to the brim ; then acknowledging the compliment that had been paid him, briefly but gratefully drained his goblet at a draught, and sat down, saying, "that the borts was cool wines, but sboiled de blood."

Horatio took the hint, and placed some claret near his guest, with another tumbler, which was speedily filled and emptied to the health of the Squire, who, in returning thanks, went through the rise and progress of the science of natural philosophy *ab ovo usque ad mala*, and ended his long oration by again expressing his delight at forming the acquaintance of a man upon whom the eyes of every scientific person were turned with admiration.

The Baron smiled and bowed ; but, catching Uncle Tom's queer eye turned upon him, not very scientifically, burst into a loud laugh, in which the brothers, when they caught the cause of it, could not refrain from joining.

"As dere is no lady, and dis is the brivate rooms, I will make pold and light ma bipe," said the Baron, extracting his meerschaum and tobacco-bag from his coat-pocket, and proceeding composedly to strike a light with flint, steel, and German tinder.

Now the poor Squire had a great aversion to the fumes of tobacco at all times, but especially when he was drinking his port wine. But what could he do ? He could not interfere with the enjoyments of the greatest natural philosopher of his day, one who was about to be presented with an honorary D.C.L. on the morrow. He submitted, with a bad grace however, much to Uncle Tom's amusement, who looked at the Baron, and winked ; but as his eye was directed to a

corner book-shelf, that learned foreigner did not think it was intended for him, so he did not return it.

The Squire proposed many toasts, and made many remarks which he thought calculated to draw his son's guest into a philosophic discussion; but he was deceived, for the Baron merely bowed, and drank, and smoked his pipe, seldom making a remark, beyond "a peautiful pottle and peautiful topacco!"

This was very vexing; and in order to ensure a display of the Baron's learning, the Squire put a direct question to him, which ought to have elicited a learned disquisition on some peculiarly difficult point, which agitated the erudite minds of all natural philosophers at that particular time.

"Ma var dear sar," said the Baron, rolling out a volume of smoke, "pusiness is pusiness, and bleasure is bleasure: bleasure to-day—pusiness to-morrow." Nor would he say another word; so that the Squire did all the loud talking, while Uncle Tom held a whispered conversation about the horses and colts with Horatio, and about turnips and swedes with Cicero.

"My dear father," said Horatio, when the time for coffee arrived, "I know you will excuse our leaving you over your coffee with the Baron. The fact is, we had invited the boat's crew to sup with us to-night before we got your letter, so we could not put them off, but have ordered supper in another man's rooms."

"Uncle Tom will join us," said Cicero; "and you and the Baron can do a little bit of philosophy."

"Mosh opliged," said the Baron; "put I would rather do a pit of subber."

"And I," said the Squire, "should like to join your young friends, and see them all enjoying themselves."

"Hurrah!" said Horatio. "Come along, Governor, and let us be jolly!"

"Come along, Baron," said Uncle Tom. "You are not a bad fellow for a foreigner; you can be jolly."

"Ah, ah! you have de eye—and what an eye—for de caractare—de phizionomy, eh!"

Uncle Tom felt inclined to knock the Baron down, but he looked so innocent, that Tom thought after all, he could not have meant the allusion to his divergent eye as an insult.

When they reached the supper-rooms they found about eighteen men ready assembled, to whom Horatio introduced his father and Cicero, his uncle and the Baron. The unexpected addition of three "old stagers" threw a little damp cloud over the party at first, but it was soon dissipated when the Squire, who was a little affected by his wine and the great deal of talking he had done, cut several very good jokes, and Uncle Tom and the Baron invited every body to take wine with them. They were soon "hail, fellow! well met!"

The Baron, although he had eaten enough for three at dinner, did great execution on the "proiled pones," and finished off with a large plate of dressed crab. As soon as he had washed down his last plate with some "prown peer," as he called the "pottled borter," he lighted

up his "bipe" again, and smoked away as calmly as if he had known all the party all his life.

The Squire and Uncle Tom stopped until the supper was removed and the punch and other liquids placed on the table; they then withdrew, wisely thinking that they should operate as skids on the wheels of joviality.

The Baron said "he should stay and finish his bipe and taste de bonch; he was vare fond of de bonch, put he should speak a word with his coot vriend de Squire in brivate first."

They withdrew into Horatio's bed-room, in the rooms above those in which the supper-party had been held. There the Baron, after apologising for the trouble he had given to his "coot vriend," informed him that a remittance which he had expected was not arrived, and he would be glad of the loan of "twenty or dirty bounds to bay his fees with on to-morrow."

The Squire, quite delighted at the opportunity of obliging so great a natural philosopher, took out his pocket-book and gave him a bank note for 50*l*.

The Baron shook him cordially by the hand, and assured him "he would feel vare habby when he saw him rebaid."

The Squire and Uncle Tom then left for their lodgings, and the Baron returned to the supper-rooms and resumed his bipe. After listening to many songs, and drinking many toasts, he was called upon, in his turn, for a song or a toast. He complied by singing a German student's song very well, of which the chorus was

"Edite, bibite, &c., &c."

When every one had sung every song he knew, and the party was getting rather slow, the Baron asked his next neighbours "if they ever blayed with the cards?" He was answered affirmatively, and asked to take a hand at *Van John*, as *vingt-et-un* is classically called at Oxford.

The cards were speedily produced, and whilst some of the party amused themselves with their cigars, and singing and talking, a table was made up at *vingt-et-un*. The Baron lost at first, but when the stakes were doubled, and even quadrupled, his luck began to turn. He won back all he had previously lost, and a little more. He lost so good-naturedly, and won so carelessly — smoking his "bipe" and drinking his "bonch" all the while, that every one was delighted with him, and he received a great many invitations to breakfasts, dinners, and suppers, all of which he was obliged to decline, because "he had bromised his vare coot vriend, Mistir Squire Leech, to be his guest, and live at his exbense, while he remained in Oxford."

When they were nearly tired of cards the natural philosopher condescended to teach them a new German game with the dice. The boxes were produced, and every one in the room staked a sovereign each. Every one then threw three times, and was at liberty to sell his own chance, or buy any other person's: the highest thrown, or the purchaser of the highest throw, to win the pool. This caused a great deal of speculation and a great deal of betting; and, oddly enough, the Baron who kept his hands in his pockets until he threw,

which he always did last, won seven stakes out of eleven, besides several sums by betting the odds against every caster. A little hazard concluded the evening at about half-past four; and it was quite light when the Baron parted with his young friends at my gateway, assuring them "that their bonch was coot, their bort was coot, and every thing vare bleasant," and that "he should nevare be apble to rebay their cootness."

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Horatio and his brother had breakfasted with the Squire and Uncle Tom, all the party agreed to walk up to the Star, and call on the great natural philosopher.

"Waiter," said Horatio, "is the Baron Von Inkstandhausen up yet?"

"Who, sir? We have no such name on our list," replied he of the napkin.

"I mean the gentleman who wined with us, or rather whom we wined with, — half a dozen of iced Rudesheimer, you know, — the day before yesterday."

"Oh, I know — gent. with smellers. I'll go up and see, sir."

The party sat down in the coffee-room; and William returned, and, in a whisper, said, "The man with the smellers has bolted with a basket of master's plate, and left his trunk, which we have broken open, and found full of very valuable — brickbats."

Here was a pretty business! Upon inquiry it was discovered that the Baron was a London pickpocket, who had come down on a speculation. He succeeded pretty well; for in addition to the Squire's 50*l.* it was found that he had carried off above 300*l.* from the young men whom he had so kindly taught the new German game with the dice.

The Squire was greatly disgusted, but uncle Tom threw such a queer look over his right shoulder at his nephews, that they burst out laughing, in which, after a time, their father joined.

This was not a good beginning, but we hope in our next number to portray a better ending of THE COMMEMORATION.



"CAN YOU DANCE THE POLKA?"

LONDON CHURCHES.

BY R. MONCKTON MILNES, ESQ. M.P.

I stood, one Sunday morning,
Before a large church-door,
The congregation gather'd
And carriages a score—
From one outstepp'd a lady
I oft had seen before.

Her hand was on a prayer-book,
And held a vinaigrette;
The sign of man's redemption
Clear on the book was set,—
But above the Cross there glisten'd
A golden Coronet.

For her the obsequious beadle
The inner door flung wide,
Lightly, as up a ball-room,
Her footsteps seemed to glide—
There might be good thoughts in her
For all her evil pride.

But after her a Woman
Peep'd wistfully within,
On whose wan face was graven
Life's hardest discipline—
The trace of the sad trinity
Of weakness, pain, and sin.

The few free-seats were crowded
Where she could rest and pray ;
With her worn garb contrasted
Each side in fair array —
“ God’s house holds no poor sinners,”
She sigh’d, and crept away.

Old Heathendom’s vast temples
Held men of every fate ;
The steps of far Benares
Commingle small and great ;
The dome of Saint Sophia
Confounds all human state.

The aisles of blessed Peter
Are open all the year ;
Throughout wide Christian Europe
The Christian’s right is clear —
To use God’s house in freedom,
Each man the other’s peer.

Save only in that England,
Where this disgrace I saw —
England, where no one crouches
In tyranny’s base awe —
England, where all are equal
Beneath the eye of Law.

There too each vast Cathedral
Contracts its ample room —
No weary beggar resting
Within the holy gloom —
No earnest student musing
Beside the famous tomb !

Who shall relieve the scandal
That desecrates our age —
An evil great as ever
Iconoclastic rage ?
Who to this Christian people
Restore their heritage ?

THE FORLORN HOPE.*

Hath Nature's soul,
That formed this world so beautiful, that spread
Earth's lap with plenty, and life's smallest chord
Strung to unchanging unison, that gave
The happy birds their dwelling in the grove,
That yielded to the wanderers of the deep
The lovely silence of the unfathomed main,
And filled the meanest worm that crawls in dust
With spirit, joy, and love ; on Man alone
Partial in causeless malice, wantonly
Heaped vice, disease, and slavery ?
Nature ! no ! SHELLEY.

WHAT need of this gorgeous livery—this title-page blazing with crimson, and azure, and gold—these admirably executed wood-cuts scattered profusely in every page—this luxurious typography, with its illuminated initials, its borders, and its vignettes—to increase the attraction of so favourite a name as that of Mrs. S. C. Hall ; or enhance the interest of one of the most charming tales that even her fertile and graceful pen has ever produced ? What special occasion has induced our ever-welcome friend, generally satisfied with touching our hearts, to allure our eyes also, this time, with unaccustomed enticements—presenting us with a book equally fitted to shine among the brilliant triflers of our drawing-room table, or to take higher degree and graver residence in the collegiate retirement of our library bookshelves ? Was it that you thought, Mrs. Hall, we should not sympathise with old John Hardy, the veteran pensioner of Chelsea Hospital, watching with tremulous solicitude his fragile daughter, the only solace of his age, “the bird of his bosom,” his “forlorn hope” ? Did you doubt that we should follow, with intense interest, the fate of the gentle girl left, by his sudden death, to struggle lonely and friendless with her terrible enemies—Poverty and Consumption ; expending in the hardships of service the little strength that, well husbanded, might have resisted the first inroads of disease ; and at last, knocking in despair at the door of the Hospital—and finding it shut against her ! shut, because of the very extremity of her need ; shut, because she was past hope ; shut, because for her a darker gate, and a narrower house, were open ! And when, at last, she dies in the arms of the old Irish widow, who has divided with the daughter of her husband's ancient friend her mean lodging and her scanty crust, was a picture wanting, Mrs. Hall, to enforce the pathos of the faithful creature's passionate lament ?—

“To die so, in her prime, her youth, her beauty ; to be left to die,

• The Forlorn Hope : a Story of Old Chelsea. By Mrs. S. C. Hall.

because they say there's no cure for it; THEY NEVER TRIED TO CURE HER! No place to shelter her — no one to see her — no proper food, or air, or care — my heart's jewel — who cared for all, when she had it! Still, the Lord is merciful; another week, and I should have had nothing but a drop of cold water to moisten her lips, and no bed for her to lie on. I kept *that* to the last, anyhow; and now it may go; it must go; small loss; what matter what comes of the likes of me, when such as her could have no help! I'll beg from door to door, 'till I raise enough to lay her by her father's side, in the churchyard of ould Chelsea."

Oh! you may take back your story, Mrs. Hall, strip it of its pictures, print it on the veriest tea-paper, and bind it, if you will, in the repulsive semblance of Hamel's Exercises, or the Eton Grammar; it will continue to moisten, when it has ceased to dazzle our eyes; and, as for pictures, it will daguerreotype its own — on the heart!

But what have we here? "L'envoy"—an epilogue almost as interesting as the play itself—with its description and clever lithograph of the new Hospital for Consumption at Brompton—unriddling at once the plot and purpose of the book, and the charitable eagerness of its excellent authoress to increase its attractiveness and its chances of circulation by every legitimate embellishment. Published to advocate the claims, and aid the funds, of so humane and useful an institution*—the first of its kind that has yet been established in London—this tale would have deserved our hearty recommendation, even had it been deficient, as it certainly is not, in literary merit. Indeed, now that the movement against Consumption is begun, it will be felt as an astonishing instance of Social *Inertia*, that a Malady whose victims are in this country more numerous than those of all Epidemic, Endemic, and Contagious diseases—including Typhus and Small-pox—put together, should have hitherto been suffered to ravage the human species, unchecked by any publicly organised system of alleviation or cure. Insidious in its advance, lingering in its progress; now mocking its victims with hectic phantasies of hope—now racking them with tedious pain; this Disease reminds one of the stealthy ferocity of the tiger—creeping from an ambush on his prey, and prolonging, for ghastly sport, its dying struggles. And yet it is this very tediousness, the most hideous feature of the malady, that has hitherto closed the heart—or at any rate the purse—of Christian charity against those whom it attacks. Putting duty and humanity for a moment out of question, and quitting the individual for the social point of view, can the wealthy classes fail to perceive that they bring upon themselves, by such preposterous neglect, a direct and demonstrable pecuniary loss? Ten thousand consumptive patients, lingering in ten thousand separate cottages,—absorbing, to a great extent, the time and attention of ten thousand anxious relatives, who would otherwise be productively employed,—receiving from time to time ten thousand distinct medical visits, which involve ten thousand journeys of considerable average

* Situate in Smith Street, Chelsea, where the book may be had.

distance, and impairing by these and many similar trials the resources, the spirits, and often the health, of ten thousand families;—such sufferers, so scattered, evidently entail on society a pecuniary burden, twenty times greater than would be incurred, if the same number of patients were concentrated in ten Hospitals—furnishing them with better food, lodging, air, &c., better nursing, better and more frequent medical advice, and yet occupying in their attendance less than a twentieth of the number of hands now employed. In augmented poor's rates, in diminished demand for articles of commerce, in the proportionately impaired prosperity of the country, the extravagance—yes, the short-sighted *extravagance*—of leaving the sick poor to their fate, tells, at last, upon the purses of the rich. But the same argument—carried beyond the comparatively narrow question in hand—applies, with a wider range, to prove that positive pecuniary loss is incurred whenever the productions of labour are brought so cheap—such *very* good bargains—that illness, the consequence of under payment and under feeding, falls upon the labourer. When the loss of his service, the cost of his illness, and the charge of his family on the parish, are reckoned, the *cheap* bargain turns out to be a *dear* one after all;—dear enough if he is cured in a hospital; dearer still, if he is left to perish in a hovel. Who can tell how often the reluctant contributors to poor's rates and hospitals are but unconsciously completing their payments for those “capital bargains” in needle-work, and the like, which they have chuckled so complacently at buying *under price*? Little dreamed they, that the disease and destitution which each of those hard bargains helped, in its degree, to promote, stood over to a future account, remaining unseen to draw on their purse, and perhaps double, in the long run, the cost of their purchase. Cunning tricksters as we may be, time is more than a match for us all. Pursuing us often with “limping foot,” he yet rights all wrongs in the end, and enforces payment of forgotten debts. Well, if his whirligigs bring in no sterner revenges. Well, if the bitter sufferings engendered by Commercial oppression be not counted against us, pang for pang, at some early day of reckoning and retribution. Commerce, like War, has its conquests and its spoils—like War, it may have also its reverses. Hurried on as we are by a Frankenstein of our own creation—the Factory-system—from whose grasp neither Masters nor Men can discover, as yet, any means of escape;—with the frightful gulf between rich and poor widening and deepening as we proceed; the discontent of our underground population* rumbling like an earthquake beneath our feet;—the incendiary lurking by night in our fields with his terrible weapon, the Match;—our old statesmen, professing no bolder principle than “*laissez-faire*,” our rising statesmen proposing (as yet) no deeper doctrine than a vague heroism;—the old landmarks of party overturned; the old political creeds unsettled; and no larger faith established

* We may mention that, in many districts, 43 per cent. of the miners perish by consumption, in consequence of exposure to sudden changes of temperature when enfeebled by hard living and over-work:—the term of their life is thus abridged, on an average, eleven years below the ordinary standard.

in their stead ;—amidst such portentous phenomena as these, who can foretell the chances of the next ten years ? The French King and his Nobles were dancing at Court the night before the bastille was taken. Let us avoid their blindness, if we would escape their fate. Every oppression has its price ; every injustice must be paid for in gold, or blood ; every disease, every death, with which our “good bargains,” or our short-sighted neglect, have to do, will sooner or later swell the torrent of a momentous reaction. Each, in his station, may do something to avert such calamities ; the wealthy, in striving to alleviate distress by multiplying throughout the country such Institutions as that before us ;—the philosopher in painfully elaborating the elements of that triple reform, Intellectual, Moral, Social, — which, manifesting itself in sounder Opinions, purer Manners, juster Institutions, shall effect in due time the harmonious Federation of mankind, and the elimination of misery, disease, and vice, in all their loathsome forms ;—and the HERO—(for we, too, recognize the need of an *enlightened* heroism)—in daring the perils of leadership in this magnificent movement, with the impassioned energy that overcomes opposition and infects indifference—above all, with the enduring Faith to which has been promised the removal of mountains.

Such is the wide range of thought and aspiration suggested by the discussion of this terrible disease, the Scourge of the North, with its hitherto unmitigated evils, considered in their relation to the commercial anarchy and social disorganisation, which, under the name of ‘Liberty of Trade’ and ‘Free Competition of Labour,’ engender seven-eighths of the evils which afflict humanity. Hospitals may check the ravages of consumption ; charity may alleviate the sufferings of its victims ; but for its ultimate extinction we must look to the philosopher and the hero ; to the social re-organization which they are commissioned to achieve ; and to the control which mankind, by Unitary instead of Discordant action, may hereafter attain over every form of mundane evil — not excepting even the insalubrities of climate*, and the abnormal abbreviation of human life.

* The tendency of civilisation is at first to improve climate by the drainage of marshes and moist lands, &c., but subsequently to deteriorate it by the gradual encroachment of the woodcutter on the forests that clothe the heights, which Nature intended to shelter the land from piercing winds, and to secure the vallies from inundations of water. The branches of trees, spreading in the air, divide and retard the rapid currents of wind, which, so broken, sweep the plains and hollows with a moderated force. The trunks and roots of the trees play a similar part with respect to the currents of water which are constantly descending the hills. Retarding their progress with innumerable interlacing fibres (the dams and breakwaters of nature), they prevent by this process of filtration the sudden rush of larger bodies of water into the vallies than the rivers can carry off. The inundations that have happened in the South of France, and in many other parts of Europe, within the last few years, have depended in a great measure on the injudicious felling of mountain timber for fire-wood. The inhabitants are not blind to the origin of the evil ; and in several departments of France petitions have been signed praying the government to take measures for replanting the denuded heights, and for the prevention of their further *déboisement*. There is little doubt that in time governments will learn to levy Constructive instead of Destructive armies ; and men, instead of cutting each other's throats, will accomplish, by vast Unitary operations, important con-

Large questions, these, to be raised by the appearance of so small a book—or even by the institution of a new hospital: but “*tout est en tout, et l’infiniment petit touche l’infiniment grand.*” Indeed, it is as much to be expected as desired that this movement, initiated by a few individuals, may become universal throughout the country;—that what now appears but as “a man’s hand in the horizon,” may portend “abundance of rain.” In this, as in all other great advances, the first impulse, and the sustaining energy, must proceed from the people themselves, and not from their rulers,—whose conduct latterly has not been such as to strengthen the public confidence in



PARLIAMENTARY PROGRESSION.

PALL MALL'S SUNNY SIDE,

AND THE

ART CONSERVATORIES.

[INCLUDING A NOTICE OF MR. VERNON'S GALLERY, OPENED LAST MONTH.]

AMONGST the associations of by-gone times, awakened by the name of “*Old England*,” with its straight, beech-shaded walks, hoops and perruques, poplars and pigtaileds, none are pleasanter than those connected with “the *shady side* of Pall Mall”—in those days the very cynosure of universal attraction; which natural charm, and fashionable vogue, combined to make the resort of all whom the fickle goddess “marked for her own;” where men of wit and genius congregated to interchange the newest thoughts; where foppery sunned its butterfly existence; and the powdered beauties of the Court loved to display their stately charms.

“The shady side of Pall Mall” was the toast in which every

quests over Nature. The germs of such a progress, as of every other that is not visionary, exist, and are growing: its development may ultimately render the climate of our island warm and equable; and place Consumption (along with the Plague and the Wolf) in our catalogue of extirpated Destroyers.

"choice spirit," whom the profession of arms or some freak of fortune had carried into foreign climes, was wont to embody his pleasurable reminiscences of the "valiant little island;" its sunny associations were the superadded ingredient which gave a fillip to his last bumper of champagne. Gone is the glory of its old umbrageousness! more of substance than of shade now goes to make up the sum of its attractions: and where once "the nice conduct of a clouded cane," had its triumphs and reward, now clubs have their day, careless of "nice conduct," but possessing a weight more in accordance with our utilitarian age; which, having thus displaced the fanciful to make room for the solid, has driven the Muses to a more congenial atmosphere on "Pall Mall's sunny side."

And surely, few amongst even their most lukewarm votaries but must look forward with pleasure to those months when the sun *does* appear in London, and when, from the heat, noise, and dust, and the exciting gaudy pomp of this now palace-built and gorgeous thoroughfare, they can find a relief in those quiet summer-houses of fancy, taste, and invention, then opened all along its line, for the exhibition of their annual blossoms and fruits, wherein the heart may imbibe fresh draughts of life and sensation from the creations of that sweet art that has been so happily called "silent poetry." In some bosky shade near the "brook that brawls along the wood," we can recreate the eye through yon frame as through a window, and feel the mountain breeze wafting to us all its heathy fragrance; gazing on some historic scene we mingle with the illustrious actors; an illustration of a favourite poet recalls the cherished original; almost audible is the lover who sighs "amid the lingering light," and murmurs "the one loved name;" so is the shepherd's pipe, or gallant's lay, addressed to so "fair a she," that we would fain fancy ourselves his favoured rival. But enough about those charming illusions, that all, who *can* feel and appreciate, have ere this period of the season already sought after and enjoyed, in the exhibitions of the present year. We shall refrain, therefore, from any detailed notice of galleries which have been already long opened and expatiated upon at length.

The Academy maintains its high rank, as all will witness who have seen its brilliant show. McClise is admirable in his fairy world, though less poetical than Etty with his enchanted atmosphere of colour and effect. Departing from his quiet style and quaint readings, Leslie is not so successful in his higher effort from Comus. Mulready's pictures *de genre*, are gems; and what is to be said of those by that wizard Edwin Landseer, whose magical power over his materials can present to us the drear desolation of a frozen solitude, and impress us with its poetry, as in the stag picture; or take us home to the quietest realities of daily life, as in "Disappointment;" or hurry us away in the huntsman's fierce excitement—as in that marvellous picture of "the otter speared," concentrating every form of canine ferocity in one panting, red-throated crowd!

The water-colour exhibitions this year, both old and new, are first rate. In the former, our favourite Cattermole displays extraordinary vigour, beauty, and fine feeling. That large drawing of

the "Contest of the Bridge," presents a real battle, that it does!—no sham fight this; we should hear the balls whizzing, but for the terrible clash and din of the shock of arms and horses on the bridge, where the hot strife so fiercely rages, and the river will soon run so red and thick, that we will witness it no longer. Making a worthy centre of another wall is a fine work, by the same hand, although of a totally opposite character; and to our mind, never was the prayerful thanksgiving of thoughtful Christian souls, for the good things provided for the body, imbued with more grave sanctity, or more eloquently expressed, then in the attitudes, disposition, and fine heads of those men,—inmates and familiars, seemingly, of some religious establishment, about to partake of their mid-day repast. The other artists of this society exhibit their well-known genius and ability. Of the younger society, much of praise could be and has been written, and all who pay it a visit will come away refreshed and delighted. But to the collections already opened, two have been added this month, and one of them is of peculiar interest, as it is a highly reputed assemblage of works of British art, made comparatively public by the liberality of its generous possessor. We speak of Mr. Vernon's collection, which it will be our especial pleasure and gratification to discourse of.

If we had said *selection*, it would be a fitter word; for unlike the medley of good, so-so, and positively bad, which unavoidably distracts the eye in ordinary modern exhibitions—here, a fine judgment, and correct taste, have gathered from the grafted tree only the true, the choicest, and the sweetest fruits.

Mounting the broad staircase of this handsome residence, and entering a small room to the left, we are struck immediately by that picture of Leslie's—"My uncle Toby and the Widow," from which the well-known print is engraved.

It was either painted originally with a freer pencil, and fuller tone of colour than the artist now adopts, or Time's mellowing hand has had the effect of giving it that substance, and that genial texture, which it possesses, the want of which is so much felt in his more recent productions; indeed, in these respects, it is almost superior to a picture, which is placed as a pendant to it, by a painter who was famed for these qualities, Newton. This picture "Sterne and the Gloveress," (also engraved,) seems, on the contrary, to have suffered from time. Beautiful "bits" of colour, by Etty, and small but pure specimens of Roberts, Bonnington, Newton, Webster, &c. &c. hang in this little chamber; also a Sir Joshua, unfortunately placed too high. We are now in the back drawing-room, where every eye is turned to a glorious picture by Etty, and seems to reflect back the ideas of pleasure there embodied. The subject is taken from those lines of Gray:—

"Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While, proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim, the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm."

• • • • •

And never was argosy so jewel-freighted as is this golden bark with forms of beauty. The circumambient elements court them. In the waters they lave, and in the air is a figure of love to swell the sails as the only fitting impulse to waft such a lovely crew across the lucid wave. The picture is a large one, but the most charming hues, and delicious harmony of tone pervade every inch of this lovely canvass; which for beauty of execution, poetic invention, and consistency of design, is the finest it has ever been our fortune to see from the pencil of this great master. Why will he not delight the world with more such? So skilled is he in all those subtle effects, and magical hues of colour wrought to miracles by the old Venetians, that we at once mark out his works wherever they hang, for their intensity, and deep-toned brightness. We have heard the artist himself say, "that when abroad, in Venice only he felt himself at home." And who will doubt it, who looks at the two concert-pieces that hang at either side of the fire-place, so like Titian in effect and treatment; or at the picture (in a circular frame) which graces the centre of this wall—a transcendent combination of lovely hues and graceful lines.

Some clever Landseer's are here; especially, a Highlander enlivening a very social circle of dogs with an air on his pipes, which they seem to regard as a very fitting thing to promote digestion after their meal, of which some of the fragments remain. This room is full of bijoux by Lee, Creswick, Etty, and Landseer. The boast, we suppose, of the front drawing-room is the great picture by M'Clise, of the play scene in Hamlet,—so recently exhibited, however, that all must be acquainted with its striking characteristics. The centre of the opposite wall is occupied by a picture of Wilkie's, but one of those in which he has made the attempt to bring back to his humble style the bold execution, and loaded mode of work, very well adapted for effect in large pictures, but which impair the delicacy so essential in the handling of small domestic subjects. On the left of this are two pictures, placed so as to enable us to contrast the styles of our great landscape painters, Turner and Callcott,—the Shelley and Wordsworth of pictorial art. The works of the latter, however correct and poetical they may be, are too invariably placid; a little spirit, a little sparkle, something of motion is wanted; if we could mix up with all this sugar and milk, some of the burnt brandy that the other throws into his hues, the result would be perfectly to our taste. In this picture of Venice, Turner indeed vindicates his great claims to our admiration, if he would only continue to paint in this way, the world would still assent to Sir Thomas Lawrence's opinion, that he was "the greatest landscape painter that ever lived." In another part of the room, we see these artists again contrasted with Stanfield, who has something wanting in each of the others, and yet is deficient in what they possess. Not a space on the walls of this apartment but is covered with works of talent and interest, from the pencil of all our first artists, each excellent in its own way.

On our way out we must look in at the dining-room. Over the fire-place hangs a fine picture by Wilkie, called the "Peep o' Day

Boy,"—but the name only is Irish. The figures are more like brigands of the Abruzzi, than those of the bog and the brogue. No matter, it is a fine work, and we have always admired it. That woman whose lap pillows the sleeping outlaw is a heroine with a face expressing that she feels but not fears the danger, the approach of which is whispered in her ear by the breathless girl, who has just lifted the latch, and lets in the peep o' day. How artfully these anxious figures are contrasted with those wrapped in unconscious slumber, the man and his baby boy. The story is well told, even to the early hour, for the cocks and hens are still sound upon their roost, and the pot in which the supper has been boiled some hours before, rests on the yet unexpired embers. The work is peculiarly rich and fine in colour. Near this hangs a fine picture of landscape and cattle, by Ward. Over the sideboard is a very large battle of Waterloo; or rather a canvass of the Waterloo pattern; for they are all the same, and this is the design,—A thunder cloud with dark volumes of flash-illuminated smoke, trimmed round with flags of different nations, compose the centre; from which diverge lines of red or blue towards a fore-ground, with horsemen, where great destruction is invariably supposed to have taken place, and fragments of gun-carriages, &c. finish off the pattern with a dark and varied border. The pictures in this room are not numerous; between the doors hangs a very beautiful picture of a Greek girl, by Pickersgill, and a small work of Hilton's.

We have now been through all the rooms, and depart with a desire soon to pay another visit at 50. Pall-Mall.

A few steps bring us to the British Institution, opened this month; we will look in, and compare some of the pictures of this collection with those we have just seen. No! Canaletti will not do after those fine Turners. If he has truth, there is too much of the camera lucida, and not enough of the painter in it; and other landscapes here are not superior to those we have just seen. In the higher order of subjects, however, it must be admitted that the old masters display a power and grandeur as yet unattained in our schools: although, for colour and effect, the Sir Joshuas, in the south room, may challenge the best of them.

And now, well pleased to feel that our native art holds its place against the traditional halo that surrounds the works of the ancient masters, we leave these pleasant conservatories to bask on the warmer side of Pall-Mall, — nor lack, we hope, the "glorious sun of patronage," beneath whose ripening alchemy their fruits may yield to the enthusiastic cultivators a harvest, golden as that of the fabled Hesperides!

THE PREMIER.

AMIDST the various controversies which have engaged the attention of historical critics, few have been more frequently, and perhaps more fruitlessly discussed, than the question "Whether great men make, or are made by, the Age in which they live?" It may be pronounced almost impossible to give any final answer to such an inquiry. To enable us to do so with satisfaction, we should first have an accurate knowledge of the causes which in the first instance determine human character. Besides it is so difficult to assign any comprehensive standard of greatness, for some men are revered by posterity in proportion as they were before their time in intelligence and spirit; and others again are applauded as the efficient expositors and successful vindicators of the ideas of their own age. There is the greatness of the philosopher as well as of the statesman — of the prophet who founds moral and religious systems, as well as of the warrior who conquers empires. There is the greatness of the poet who precedes, as well as that of the artist who illustrates civilization. And again, some men are great by force of antagonism and hostility to their times, deriving their moral activity from opposition and resistance; whilst others exhibit their whole force from an intense sympathy with the social system under which they have been reared. For which reasons, it is impossible to assign any one invariable principle as causative of individual greatness.

Nevertheless the spirit of generalization leads some modern and contemporary critics to treat all the men of literature and history as mere creatures of the ages in which they were born. Forgetting that variety and individualism are as much parts of human nature as conformity and imitation, those critics (some of them the highest ornaments of our literature) on examining the works or character of a great man, first of all seek to fix, in a few graphic sentences, the prevailing features of a particular time, and then establish a general resemblance between the time (as depicted by themselves) and the works or actions (as the case may be) of the poet or statesman upon whom they may comment. Thus Machiavel and Milton — Burke and Ossian — Dante and Dryden are all depicted as the products of the respective ages in which they flourished. Is it necessary to examine such instances *seriatim*, in order to demonstrate the unsoundness of such a theory? Where is the fanaticism of the Cromwellian era shown in the productions of the Miltonic muse? or was it from the spirit of the eighteenth century — with its levity, luxury, and want

of all earnestness and faith—that Burke imbibed his moral enthusiasm and the deep seriousness of his full-toned mind?

The truth is, that a remark of Burke's may be not ill applied to those critics, who, in their love of general principles, have been rash enough to account for Shakspeare having been so great a genius, and who have imagined that they have explained satisfactorily why the "sweet swan of Avon" sang so divinely, by assigning the character of the age in which he lived as a main cause of the development of his genius! The "degenerate fondness for trickling short cuts, and little fallacious facilities," which, according to Burke, has been in all ages a cause of arbitrary power, has also been the source of this widely-spread habit of accounting for every genius, on some neat, sparkling little principle, that is equally portable, plausible, and superficial.

Without going into the question further, the doctrine that master spirits are produced by their times may be pronounced untenable on the evidence supplied by history; and as a matter of speculation, it may be condemned as being totally irreconcilable with the spontaneity and originality that are present in all the manifestations of *first-rate* genius.

But with regard to the *secondary* men, it may, without inconsistency, be admitted that they may be pronounced as being for the most part the mere product of circumstances. And of all kinds of eminent men, none are more influenced by external and accidental causes than statesmen, especially those whose lot is cast in a community governed by popular institutions. They cannot dwell, abstract, isolated, and remote from general sympathy and national prejudice; they must conform, concede, and compromise. To acquire power directly over others, they must assume the prejudices of those over whom they seek to wield authority. In order to direct the impulses of their party, they must affect to feel its passions, and identify themselves with its aspirations. By constant collision with society, and with large bodies of men, their personal characters gradually become conventional; and, reciprocating the passions of those around them, their own peculiarities gradually wear away under the influence of social intercourse and political attrition.

If ever there was an eminent man, who might be taken as being simultaneously the creature and expositor of the age in which he lived, it is the present Premier of England—Sir Robert Peel. It is an age of compromise and common-place—unmarked by high enthusiasm or passion, but, nevertheless, removed far from contempt, by its general spirit of activity, intelligence, and progress—its rational prejudice against all violent change, and its reasonable regard for every improvement which appears to be feasible. It is for the most part, a cool, circumspect, sensible, and plodding age, in which, much that is very useful, and little that is truly glorious is achieved. In conduct moderate, because its hopes are not extravagant; it is in morals utilitarian, because its sympathies are narrow. It is not a grand age—an era in which men's hearts throb with expectations—when their minds vibrate with revolutionary emotion; but neither is it a mean,

stupid, and apathetic age, in which men grovel in ignorance and apathy — in which they live lives of dejection, terminating in deaths of despair. In religion it gropes, with critical circumspection, for a better creed than has heretofore been extant; but unlike "Young Germany," it does not querulously gasp for a new revelation. On the contrary, it seems satisfied with eclectic views, and requires that its prophets and instructors should be rather distinguished for the soundness of their reasoning, and the general correctness of their sentiments, than for the startling sublimity of their ideas, or the glowing enthusiasm of their characters. In politics, it shrinks from the vast; — and advocates the small, as having the recommendation of safety. It wishes to see its way clearly, and recoils instinctively from any uncertain though captivating policy; but when it has once discerned the course to be followed, it acts with promptitude and energy. It is an age of adaptation and compromise, rather than of invention or originality; an age of slow but certain social change, in which correct views are widely diffused, and commonplace sentiments are decorously uttered. In short, it is a most respectable, but by no means a glorious age; and, finally, to describe it in a sentence, it is the age of Sir Robert Peel!

Twenty years since what different features were presented in the times, when the public mind heaved with excitement; and a passionate love for movement, vague in its purposes but violent in its manifestation, was the marked characteristic of society. That was an age in England of great expectations, of rooted aversion to the existing state of things, of bold expression and unsettled desire, of alarm on one side, and enthusiasm on the other, — of discursive views, and dangerous projects. It was an age in which a daring ambition had taken possession of the public mind, displaying itself in an energetic movement for the education of the People — and the introduction of utilitarian reform into all the national institutions, whether ecclesiastical, political, or legal. It was the time in which the middle class had resolved not to rest until it acquired constitutional power and influence commensurate with its increased social importance. It worked by Popular Education, and by the incessant application to politics of astonishing energies. Its restless discontent — its passion for movement — its vague but grand moral purposes — its fierce energy in assailing existing grievance — its spirit of resistance to prescriptive authority, were most admirably represented in the personal character of the man of that time; for it was the age of *Henry Brougham*!

Indeed, though at first sight no two men seem to present fewer points for making a parallel between their political characters, upon a comprehensive review of their respective careers, the amount of personal influence which Brougham and Peel have exercised upon their contemporaries is suggestive of contrast. In personal character totally dissimilar, their ambition has been similar, springing from a love of power, and a desire of fame. But their way of arriving at their respective objects has been strikingly different, and the force of antithetical contrast between Brougham and Peel is derived from the fact that both having commenced their careers in the Senate at nearly

the same period, they may each of them be regarded as the historical representative of the period which immediately preceded and followed the Reform Bill. It may be added, that each of them moulded himself upon the general spirit of the times, which he found most congenial with his character, and best suited for the exhibition of his powers.

Nothing can more clearly show the freedom of English institutions than the power which these two men have respectively wielded. They started in life upon terms more nearly equal as to social condition than persons generally consider. For though Peel was heir to vast wealth, yet his family was new ; while Brougham's possessed an ancient but not celebrated name, and its representative required the aid of a profession. In 1830, then in his fifty-first year, Brougham became Chancellor ; and in 1835, then in his forty-seventh year, Peel, for the first time, became Premier of England.

And though at first sight the career of Brougham may appear more dazzling, on closer examination it will be found that Peel has achieved as great a destiny. It is worth while to examine the abilities of the Premier with critical impartiality.

There are many persons who, upon a superficial examination of Sir Robert Peel, are disposed to speak slightly of his powers, when contrasting him with the Pitts and Foxes of former ages. They censoriously disparage his speeches, and compare them with the grand and massive orations of Fox — so full of political wisdom, of profound and original reasoning, not derived from books, or other sources, but from the native strength of his comprehensive mind. On listening to the calm and equable flow of the Premier's eloquence, pursuing a dead level course, they ask whether such oratory can be classed with the grand and stately style of the younger Pitt, or with the awful torrent of Chatham ? They ask whether such a style of artificial oratory can vie with the brilliant declamation of Canning —

" By nature gifted with a power and skill
To charm the heart and subjugate the will."

Or they tauntingly compare him with Brougham and Plunket, and with confident presumption decide upon him as being in the secondary class of the public men of England.

Their decision would be right if Prime Ministers were to be estimated merely by an academical standard, and if surpassing genius for oratory were the best criterion of the merits of a statesman. It may, without injustice, be admitted that Peel is inferior in eloquence to the great orators that have been named. It would be equally unjust to assert that in political abilities he has been surpassed by any of them with the exception of Chatham.

The distinctive excellence of Sir Robert Peel's political genius consists in the fact, that no other man has exhibited the same wide range of admitted talents, of a genuine as distinguished from a showy character. It is very true that Mr. Fox was a greater orator than Sir Robert Peel, and that he possessed a noble ardour of character, that glowed with passion and enthusiasm : " Quoique la force d'argumentation fût le caractère distinctif de son éloquence, on sentait tant d'âme au fond

de ses raisonnemens, que l'on en etait ému." (Madame de Staël). But, as a parliamentary leader, Charles Fox was deplorably reckless of consequences: he was too much the sport of his passions, and on several occasions destroyed the party with whose interests he was intrusted. It is just as difficult to imagine Fox creating and then wielding the Conservative party for upwards of a dozen years with the consummate political strategy displayed by Sir Robert Peel, as it is to imagine the present Premier committing such a mistake as to coalesce with Lord North, in 1783, supposing that destiny had placed him in the Whigs of those times. Again, it is impossible to conceive Sir Robert Peel performing the dazzling part which Pitt played in the Senate, when he was twenty-three years of age; but, on the other hand, it is very difficult to believe, that if Sir Robert Peel had been Premier from 1791 to 1800, he would have been guilty of the fatal and frantic blunders in finance committed by Mr. Pitt.

It is true that Canning had a more brilliant mind, and that Brougham had more native genius than Sir Robert Peel; but the acquisitions of the Premier are of a more substantial and real character than the more attractive qualities of his more popular rivals. Whatever subject Peel has applied himself to, he has almost invariably mastered. There is no charlatanism in his knowledge, which is always genuine. No one can charge him with being a smatterer, or with cramming for a debate. As a constitutional lawyer, his attainments are held in deserved respect, and are sufficiently proved by his admirable speeches on privilege. It is admitted that no one possesses his knowledge of Finance, and that he is thoroughly familiar with all the intricacies of the Currency question. What general question can come before Parliament on which he will not address himself to the House with an amount of knowledge, and debating talent, beyond the reach of any other Member of the House of Commons. In powers of statement and lucid exposition of a perplexed subject, he is not equalled by any of his contemporaries. If he has not Lord Stanley's raciness and energy of style, neither has he any of the Colonial Secretary's tendency to exhibit undue heat of manner. If he does not take the original views to which the philosophical mind of Lord John Russell impels him, still the Premier can more amply illustrate a subject, displaying a practised familiarity with details as well as principles, and an artful method of arranging his arguments in the very best manner, — added to which superior parliamentary accomplishments, he exhibits all those *agrémens* of a public speaker in which, from physical causes, Lord John Russell is notoriously deficient. If he has not Lord Palmerston's jaunty liveliness of style, neither has the Premier any of the Noble Viscount's levity of manner, or tendency to pomposity, which so often and very unjustly gives the late Secretary for Foreign Affairs all the appearance of a forcible feeble.

In fact, one might go through the whole list of public men, and show that, while Peel wants some particular quality by which each of them are respectively distinguished, still that the Premier surpasses every one of them in the wide range of his political acquirements,

and in the singular variety of his statesmanlike abilities. More conspicuously than any of his predecessors, Sir Robert Peel exhibits that rare conjunction between the official qualities of a Minister, and the accomplishments of a parliamentary speaker, which one looks for in a Prime Minister of England. It would be difficult to name any other man, who has been at the same time so artful in tactics, and so accomplished in knowledge—so sagacious in council, and so skilful in debate.

His political life naturally divides itself into three parts.

In the first part, from 1809 to 1822, when he became Home Secretary, he exhibited all the popular talents upon which he sought to acquire political distinction. He vigorously displayed that degree of natural and acquired ability which gave him a presumptive claim to the post of one of the great party leaders of the State.

In the second, from his acceptance of the Seals of the Home Department, to the period of his resignation of office in 1830, he carefully cultivated those high official qualities, which gain for their possessor the confidence of his Sovereign, and procure for him a moral authority in the councils of the Empire.

In the third period, from the passing of the Reform Bill to the present time, he played before Europe that part in politics, which gives him a lasting place in history. It was in this portion of his career that the Premier manifested his greatest ability, and signally exhibited those qualities which constitute the greatness of a statesman.

He may be said to have then created the Conservative party—to have originated the idea on which it rests,—and, proceeding from speculation to practice, to have made its principles widely prevalent throughout the English community. And even if Conservatism should pass away, the influence which it exerted would not cease; and the recollection of its expounder would not terminate with his political fall—any more than the fame of Grattan's conduct in 1782 has perished with an Irish Parliament—or the consequences of Fox's unsuccessful opposition to the French war have ceased to operate by way of historical example.

In discerning the exact effect which the Reform Bill produced on English society, and in conforming exactly to the genius of the time, he showed more statesmanlike penetration, and more capacity for affairs, than any of his contemporaries in either house of Parliament. Unlike Lord Lyndhurst, or Mr. John Wilson Croker, the Premier did not despair of the fortunes of his party. He felt calmly assured that the reaction against change amongst the middle class would cause a prejudice against the Whigs; while the desire for further innovation would render them unpopular with the restless and dissatisfied portion of the community. The years 1833, 1834, and 1835, form the most brilliant portion of the Prime Minister's personal career.

All men of all parties are disposed to accord to Sir Robert Peel the praise here allotted to him.

But how does it happen that such a man should not be an object of enthusiasm and confidence? how comes it that the exhibition of

his great powers produces no other sentiment in the community than that of a cold and mere critical approval, which never warms into admiration, or glows with enthusiasm? There is Conservatism, but verily there is no Peelism, in the country. In former times, men enthusiastically proclaimed themselves as Pittites and Foxites; but it would be rare or impossible to find the enthusiast who, with the fervour of unaffected feeling, would publicly proclaim himself a Peelite!

The prejudice which is rising against Sir Robert Peel is a movement against the spirit of the times, and is a strong symptom of the character of the approaching age. It is beginning to be felt that our age is over mechanical, and that the physical principle is allowed to predominate over the moral. There is a growing tendency not to be satisfied with the perception of the mere external causes that regulate society; the age is beginning to demand from its representatives and guides that they should exhibit a sympathy with the inner life of human nature. A modern author has said that man has two lives — the inner and outer; and it can be scarcely denied that whatever is palpable, mechanical, and external, has been almost exclusively developed in this age. And if such still continued to be the character of the age, Sir Robert Peel would remain, for years to come, the foremost man of the time. For he has been almost entirely formed out of the external and conventional. He never betrays any symptom of possessing an inner life—his human nature is that of the merest public man—of an individual whose character is wholly moulded by external circumstances. He is a Benthamite Tory defending prescription upon the ground of utility—the leading statesman of a mechanical era—administering the affairs of the British Empire according to the spirit of the dominant middle class.

And it is thus that the moral inferiority of the Premier becomes manifest. Examined on the score of rare talents, he may dispute the palm of political excellence with most of his predecessors; but he is radically defective in that potent quality which gained for the Chathams, the Foxes, the Grattans, the Cannings, not merely the support of political partizans, but the enthusiastic affection of devoted friends. The British public have often approved of the course, and admired the talents, of Sir Robert Peel, but they have never loved his character, or sympathised with his personal ambition. They have given him a respectful and discriminating—but never an ardent support. He stands out in parliamentary annals as the able statesman, who led a party without possessing its sympathy, and governed the nation without obtaining the affection of one faction or the abhorrence of the other.

And so will he stand in History. He will be remembered as a man of pre-eminent parliamentary talents, unrivalled in shaping events by the calculated agency of political combinations. He will be recollected as a progressive Tory—as a man who won power for himself and his party by his happy conformity to the spirit of the times. His career will be viewed without sympathy or emotion, for the absence of ethical purpose will destroy the feeling of admiration which his abili-

ties invite, and his coldness of character will stifle all sentiments of affectionate regard.

The reader will observe that we have, throughout the whole of the foregoing remarks, confined ourselves almost exclusively to the historical point of view; refraining from any speculation on the politics of the day, the chances of the present parliamentary campaign, or the immediate dangers which are supposed to be thickening around the dominant party, and its leader. Thus much, however, we may venture to say in general terms, that the stability of *any* party however strong, — of *any* leader however able, — cannot fail to be seriously compromised by braving too often or too lightly, the popular odium which (justly or unjustly) attaches to rescinded votes, and, above all, to *individual recantation*. The public common sense cannot but revolt against the spectacle of party-followers who, within the brief space of three days, vote on opposite sides of the same question, —

“ Finding, with nice discriminative sight,
Black's not so black, nor white so very white.”



“ TRULY I DO PERCEIVE HERE A DIVIDED DUTY.”

THE DIARY OF THE LADY WILLOUGHBY.

1635—1648.*

WHEN we saw the first announcement of this work, we were prepared to expect another welcome contribution toward the history of a period unexampled in interest—that of the parliamentary war; and we began to hope that in these days of general “record commissions” some personal narrative or memoir of those eventful times had, perhaps, been discovered in some forgotten escrutoire, or hitherto unransacked cabinet, as authentic, and as valuable, even if not so graphic, as Lucy Hutchinson’s delightful memoirs. The Diary of the Lady Willoughby, however, is not authentic. Although the masquerade is admirably kept up, and although both printer and bookbinder have aided to the utmost, and the thick ribbed paper, and the lined pages, and the large woodcut of the Willoughby arms, even the gold paper sprinkled over with pale yellow flowers, of the binding, (how it reminded us of the century-old books for good little girls and boys, which our grandmamma used to let us peep at, when we were *very* good,—that is, very quiet,)—even all these cannot disguise from the reader, accustomed to works of the seventeenth century, that the book is of modern origin—not only “imprinted,” as the title-page quaintly sets forth, “by Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, Paternoster Row, over against Warwick Lane, 1844,” but is the work of some living writer.

Still, no one who turns over its pages can feel disappointment, any more than he might feel who, when reading the poems of the good priest Rowley, should be told that the strongly-locked chest in St. Mary Redcliffe’s was a mere fiction, and that a gifted youth of eighteen was the real author; or than he who, after following the “Ancient Marinere” through his wondrous narrative, should be told that it was written by “that old man eloquent” who departed from among us but as yesterday, instead of being the genuine remains of some veritable minstrel of the olden time.

It is as a work of fiction that we shall treat the Diary of the Lady Willoughby—a work of fiction of great interest and of great beauty—exhibiting a heroine neither faultlessly excellent, nor of superhuman loveliness, painting no scenes of “intensely thrilling interest,” as puffing advertisements say, still less scenes of wild and extravagant passion, or of dark crime and fearful retribution, but detailing the home scenes of a noble and gentle lady’s life, intermixed with passing

* “So much of the Diary of Lady Willoughby, as relates to her Domestic History, and to the Eventful Period of the Reign of Charles the First.”—Longmans.

notices of public affairs, and sadly sweet reflexions on the mutability of all things.

The work opens with a pretty morning scene, in which the Lady Willoughby, "for the first time since the birth of my little sonne, opened the casement, and looked forth upon the park." Then follow details of the preparations for the christening, the expected arrival of her mother, and a slight lover's quarrel, soon made up, when the diary of proceeds :

"Mett my *Husband* in the *Corridor* with *Lord Brooke*, and well nigh lost my Selfe-command when he gave a kindly pressure of my Hand as he led me down stairs. This Evening how different does all appeare; and though this and some other late Experiences occasion me to perceive that Life is not so calm a Sea as it once did seeme in my ignorance of humane Nature; slight Breezes may ruffle it, and unseene Rocks may give a Shock to the little Shipp: haply the Mariner will learn to steer his course, and not feare Shipwreck from every accident."

The arrival of her mother is shortly after followed by the departure of Lord Willoughby.

"My deare *Lord* set forth at a little past six, with only one Serving-man, who had a led Horse and one to carry the baggage. After they had rode some way, they stopp'd, and my *Lord* dismounted, and taking a short cut thro' the Park, came up to the Window where I had remain'd to watch his Departure: he bade me call the *Steward*, gave him some directions; then telling me to keep up a good heart, took another tender Leave, and followed by *Armstrong*, returned to the spot where were the Horses; and he mounting the led Horse, they were soon out of sight. Old *Britton* seemed to understand he was not to follow his Master, and came and reared himself up to the Window, resting his Fore-paws on the stone: I patted his broad Head, and questioned not that he felt as I did, that his best Friend was gone: tooke a few turns with him on the *Terrace*; the Mist cleared off the distant Woods and Fields, and I plainly discern'd the Towers of *Framlingham Castle*, and could heare the pleasant sound of the Scythe cutting through the thick Grass in the fields nearest, and the Cuckoo, as she fled slowly from hedge to hedge."

Domestic cares now engage her attention. "Busy in the Still-room this forenoon; put the dried rose-leaves in paper bags. Alice was picking the rosemary."

"Bade *Alice* take heed there should be a good store of Chamomile-flowers and Poppy-heads, and of Mint water; our poore Neighbours look to us for such: gave her my *Mother's* recipe for *Hungary Water* and the Conserve of Hips.

"*John* took the Yarn to the Weaver's, and brought back Flax, Spices, and Sugar. The Stage Waggon had not arrived when he left *Ipswich*, and there was no package from *London*. My *Lord* was to send Hangings for the large *Drawing Room*; but it matters not."

Meanwhile, "baby grows finely," and has also cut a tooth; shortly afterwards we find.

"June 6, *Monday*. *Baby* walked a few steppes alone, and did seem greatly pleased thereat, as were his Parents.

"These Lines repeated by one at supper-time, who hath met with divers Mis-chances in his life :

*The Fortunate have whole Yeares,
And those they chose:
But the Unfortunate have onely Dayes,
And those they lose.*

"At Dinner near twenty People; some remain till next week; young *Harry Vane*, the Lord *Brooke*, and others. My *Husband* brought me a Muff, and a Fan of Ostrichfeathers, and Sir *Philip Sydney's Arcadia*; the latter most suited to my taste; it is said the *King* dothe hold this Worke in high esteeme."

Alas! the entry soon after in the Diary is—"Baby ill, and feverish;" then, "my poor child worse;" and then,—

"No better to-day: I dare not think: Strength and Spirit needed to the utmost; for he likes no one so well to nurse him, and hath ever a sweet Smile when I come againe after a short absence. Oh *God*, spare him to me: give mee not this bitter cup.

"Weeks have pass'd and I am childless: yett doe I seeme as one not awaken'd from a frightfull dream. My Child, my Child.

"The Fever hath left me weak: I dare not looke back, and there is nothing now left me to looke forward to."

"Return'd through the *Park*: never saw the Chestnuts and Beeches more beautiful in their autumn tints, the fallen Leaves crushed pleasantly beneath my Feet, the Sun was setting before I was aware, and the Aire grew suddenly chill. Taking the nearest way, I entered the house by a side door, and there beneath the old Mulberry saw the little Cart and Whip as they had beene left by my poore Child the last day he was out, when he looked so tired, and I carried him in. I stooped and took up the Whip, and hiding it beneath my cloke, went straight up stairs: no Hand had touched it since his: the teares I wept over it did me good: it seemed my innocent right to weep over this Token of my *lost one*."

Comfort at length revisits the sorrowing young mother, and she now bends over the cradle of a second child, her daughter *Diana*. Still "a weight is on my spirit that no effort or time has yet shaken off: will it ever be thus? Young as I am, is Hope so blighted that it will never more unfold its fair blossoms?" Rumours of the coming conflict however arise, and

"July 19, *Wednesday*. Late in the day Mr. *Gage* rode up: he tells us Mr. *John Hampden* hath refused the late Demand for Ship-money: Discontent encreasing every where. The proceedings of the *Starre Chamber* against *Prynne* and others have roused the whole country, even many who before tooke not part with the Malcontents doe now expresse their Abhorrence of this Tyranny. My *Husband* will go to *London* straightway.

"With a heavy heart saw my deare *Lord* depart this forenoon: *Armstrong* accompanying him as farr as *Ipswich*: Struggled against desponding Thoughts, and pass'd some time in the *Nursery*, to give my selfe Occupation of Mind as well as Hands. After a Walk on the *Terrace*, went to *Alice's Room*: she hath long beene ailing: sate some while with her, to cheer her, as I knew she would take to hearte this voyage to *London*, which Place, in her eyes, doth abound with all manner of Wickednesse and Danger."

The entries in the Diary now become less frequent; we find two other daughters have been added to the family, but

"These are fearfull times, let mee be encreasingly vigilant; and whatsoever hapeneth, be faithfull to the Duties of my present Station, Wife and Mother; and a large Household, the Charge whereof is much left to mee: sufficient Care for one of but little Experience, and with Health not so good as might be wished.

"Read in *Isaiah* chapter 26, these Words of Comfort: *Thou keepest him in perfect Peace whose Mind is stayed upon Thee, because he trusteth in Thee*: May I attaine unto this trust, need have I of better Strength than my own at this Time when my dearest *Life* may be in circumstances of Danger; at a Time like this, who is safe? the *King* ever playing false with the *Commons*, and disregarding their Privileges, & the *House* now sitting in Judgement on his favoured *Servant*: yet

whatsoever Danger may threaten, I would not that my *Husband* should desert his Poste; rather let mee rejoyce that he standeth up in his place to defend the People's Rights."

A beautiful account of her mother's last days follows.

"I remember as clearly as if 'twas no longer ago than yesterday, the Day whereon my *Mother* arrived, which did afterwards prove to be the last time it was ever my Happinesse to welcome her under our Roof. The Afternoon was calm and beautifull, and the Sunne low in the West caused the Shadows to fall at length across the Grasse, the Honeysuckle over the Doorway was covered with its pale luscious Flowers, which hung down untill some of the trailing Branches lost themselves in the old Sweet-brier Bush, and the White Rose, my *Mother's* favourite Tree, was arrayed in its faire Blossoms. As we stood looking at these, she did presently arrive. Methought she stepped feebly from her Coach; and when I gave her such aid as I could, she sayd with a mournfull yet sweet smile, I need a stronger Arme now than thine, my *Daughter*: one equally kind, I do fully believe, she added as she leaned on my *Husband's*. Saddest Thoughts took hold of me, yet did I use my best endeavour to conceal the Feare that struck suddenly on my Heart, that her Tarryance here would not be for long. She looked better when seated in her accustomed Chaire: and her pale Cheek had a delicate colour, which gave me a Hope that her Weaknesse was not so great as at first did appeare, and that the Difficulty in Walking might be from her having sate so long in the Coach, causing a degree of Stiffnesse."

Meanwhile her strength decays, but

"One fore-noon I did prevaile with her to let them carry her a considerable distance from the House, to a sheltered sunny Spot, whereunto we did oft resort formerly to hear the Wood-pigeons which frequented the Firre Trees hereabout. We seated ourselves, and did passe an houre or two very pleasantly: she remarked how mercifully it was ordered, that these Pleasures should remaine to the last Days of Life; that when the Infirmities of Age make the Company of others burthen-some to us, and ourselves a burthen to them, the quiet Contemplation of the Workes of *God* affords a simple Pleasure which needeth not aught else than a contented Minde to enjoy: the Singing of Birds, even a single Flower, or a pretty Spot like this, with its bank of Primroses and the Brooke running in there below, and this warm Sun-shine, how pleasant are they. They take back the Thoughts to our Youth, which Age doth love to look back upon. She then related to me many Passages of her early Life, wherein was observable the same Love of natural Beauty that doth now minister in so large a measure to her Enjoyment.

"She asked me if I would repeate the 90th and 91st *Psalmes*, which I did for the most part; she repeated after me the words, *Yet is their Strength Labour and Sorrow*. Three score and ten Yeares I have not seene: and this lengthened Span of Life may not be ordained for me, yet in the latter Days of my Pilgrimage thus farre toward the Grave, the *Lord* hath layd upon me no Burthen which his Love hath not made light and easy to be borne; Sight and Hearing remaine, and the Use of my Limbs so farre as an old woman needeth. Surely Goodnesse and Mercy have followed me all the Days of my Life, and will, I doubt not, to the close: and my evening Sun will, I humbly hope, be permitted to set in brightness. She took a Rose-bud which I had gathered, and sayd, This Bud will never open; but some there are which will unfold in Heaven. She look'd earnestly in my Face: I perceived her meaning, My precious *Child*, mine that is in Heaven, I sayd, and could not refraine from Teares. Calm thyselfe, my *Daughter*: I shall soone meet him, if I am founde worthy to be where his pure Spirit is: let me feel as a Link between thy Soul and his. Oh that I may one day meet there all my deare Children: many have been my Bereavements, but Mercy, tender Mercy was in all my Afflictions.

"One Night, it was the *Sabbath*, she called us both to her Bed-side, expressed her Happinesse in beholding us so united in the bonds of Affection and Friendship: in a most touching manner addressed my *Husband*, commended me as her chief

earthly Treasure to his continued tender Care and Love, and then, the Tears running down her Face, thanked him for the Kindnesse and Gentlenesse he had alwayes shewn to her beloved *Daughter*: she pressed our two Hands together, rays'd herself up, and in a low tremulous Tone, slowly utter'd as nearly as I can remember them, these Words:

"Allmighty Father, behold these my Children: blesse them in each other and in their Children: keepe them in the Path of Righteousnesse: protect them in Danger, comfort them in Affliction, and when they come to passe through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, let their spirit faint not, neither be afraid: but let them lay hold on the Promises of Eternal Life, through Faith in Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

"She sunk back exhausted, and revived not againe to hold much Intercourse with us.

"About five of the clock in the morning she opened her eyes: the early Sunne shon in at the Casement, which was at the farthest side from the Bed: she appeared conscious of the Day-light, and we could partly distinguish the Words, *Heaven, so Sun, the Glory of God, the light thereof*. She look'd on all that were neare unto her, and we thought she said, *Deare Children*. I stoop'd to kisse her: with a last Effort she returned my Embrace; and as I gently layd her Head on the Pillow, her pure Spirit left its earthly Mansion."

We need not apologize for the length of this extract; for its truthfulness and beauty must come home to every reader. Lord Willoughby is still absent, but

"At five of the clock my Cousins *Anne* and *Margaret* arrived: seem warm-hearted young Women, *Anne* grown into more Comeliness than she appeared likely to do, two yeares since; *Margaret* lovely as a bright Morning in May, the calme Truthfulness of her Countenance brings to mind *Spenser's* Verses to the Memorie of his beloved Friend,

*A sweet attractive kind of Grace
A full Assurance given by Lookes,
Continuall Comfort in a Face
The Lincaments of Gospell Bookes:*

At length Lord Willoughby returns, though only on his way to the North.

"Late in the Afternoone my Lord arrived, travaille-soiled, having ridden so farre out of his way to the North: he with some others are appointed to present to the King, now at *Yorke*, a Declaration from Parliament. He had but a few Houres to stay: so much to be sayd in short Time, we scarce knew where to begin: he inclined to dismissee for a while all Public Affaires. I caused a good fire to be made in our favourite Parlour. *Armstrong* relieved his Master of parts of his Riding-dresse, & tooke Orders respecting fresh Horses, baggage, &c. the while I hasten'd up to the *Nurserie* & brought downe the three *Girls*. *Fan* tooke her old Place on her Father's Knee, *Di* on a Stool at his Feet, & I nursed and coaxed *Baby* into not being alarmed at a Stranger, so little has she scene of him, that at first she did refuse to leave my Arms for his: very great was our Satisfaction and Delight: he look'd wearied, and well he might, but sayd the sight of so many deare Faces was the onely Happiness he had had since he last saw us, and did more to rest him than could aught else: the Dogs too shared his Notice: and the Children prattled so that we could hardly get in a word to each other. One by one they were sent off to Bed, and we had a short space of Quiet to ourselves.

"The Take-leave time came at last, And now, deare Heart, he sayd to his trembling Wife, with much adoe I kept a tolerable Composure, have no Misgivings of thyselfe: I have ever found thee of quick Wit in Difficulties, and manifesting a quiet Courage and Endurance, at which I have marvelled: and if need should be, I will find Meanes for your better Protection. Well was it now that the Horses were readie, and he look'd not around, after his parting Embrace, to see mee drown'd in

Teares. He set forth well armed. Two Men the same, and another with a led Horse and Baggage.

"Went to my lonely Roome at Night: the Casement shook with the Winde, and presently the Raine came downe heavily: for a time I was overpovr'd with the Grief of losing him, and thinking of him riding all night in Weather so tempestuous, the while I sat by a brightly burning Fire, in a comfortable warm Roome. Yet would I gladly share his Hardshippes, and be at his Side through all. Roused myself at last, and prepared for Rest, praying for Strength that my selfish Love may never bee a Hinderance to my beloved Husband in the way of his Duty, but rather that I may give all the Aide that a poore weake Creature may, to one so farre above her in all true Noblesse. As I beheld the little Face sleeping beside mee, thought what should betide if wee were driven from our Home: how should wee find Shelter for this tender Flower, and the other deare ones."

Lord Willoughby arrives safely at Nottingham. He "had some knowledge of Mr. Hutchinson, a stedfast friend on the side of liberty, and justice." Would that the Diarist had introduced delightful Lucy Hutchinson also to us. Indeed, had some of the great leaders of the parliament been introduced to us, as they acted and spoke, these portions of the Diary which relate to public affairs would have had an equal interest with those parts that detail domestic occurrences. As it is, the notices of passing events are little more than quotations from Rushworth, Lucy Hutchinson, and other contemporary writers; and we willingly pass them over, to meet with passages like the following.

"The Season of *Christmasse* hath pass'd gloomily. At a time when Families are divided by civill Differences and many gathered round a darkened and desolate Hearth, there is not much disposition to Mirthfulness. The new Yeare hath arisen upon a distressed Land: the Dayes and the Weekes thereof are yet in the Hand of the *Almightie*: and who shall live or who shall die we know not. Apart from the publicke Distractions and Unhappinesse, precious Blessings and abundant Mercies fill our House with rejoicing and thanksgiving: not onely Life but Limbs spared to him who had to go forth into Battle and danger, and Nurserie prospering. Methought as yesterday I sate by a bright Fire-side, my three little *Daughters* playing round mee, the deare *Father*, though absent, in health and present safetie, few were so blest, suddenly their Play ceased, & *Di* and *Fanny* were no where to be seene, *Bess* on my Knee: when hidden in the deep Bay Window, they sung to my eare very sweetly the Carols they had learned from the Neighbours Children: they staid up to Supper, and kept up a fine Prattle.

"Walked downe to *Wingfields*: the poore Mother is in a pitiable state, her Son's lingering Death has worne her away, & she doth long to lay her head beside him in the Grave. Strove to comfort her, but beleieve she took more in seeing mee share her Sorrow than in any Words I could say. Went on to see the Soldier who had his arme broken, beside other injuries; he was greatly better and able to walke a little: he sate cleaning his Carbine and Sword, and the Teares ran downe his Wife's pale Cheeke as he talked of againe joining the Army, so soone as he could beare the Fatigue: poore Creature.

Then the "great fear, and amazement in the country round at the sight of three suns in the firmament, and a rainbowe with the bend towards the earth," is noted, with a kind of half belief in the portent, most characteristic of the puritan lady, whose dread of superstition cannot yet entirely overcome the belief of her childhood in omens. "Many did thinke it portended Evile," she says, "but that which did most affect my mind was beholding the Bow that had been set in the Cloude as a token of the everlasting Covenant, now appearing as it

were overthrown. No wonder that we soon after read of dissensions that arise in our own party, and alterations in the army."

Short notices of the executions of Sir John Hotham and Archbishop Laud follow, intermixed with remarks on domestic affairs and laments over the still unsettled state of the country. Then the children sicken with the measles, from which they slowly recover.

"The day so milde the Children went out, & did greatly enjoy the fresh aire, and rambling about the Fields: seated on the Bank by the Pond, they wove Caps and Baskets of Rushes. *Fanny's* dainty Hands and slim Fingers looking barely strong enough for the worke: whilst we all at worke, we saw *Dr. Sampson* coming across the Field: whereupon I left them, to hear what newes he might bring. At their tender age, I like not their hearing of Fighting and Crueltie more than can be helped. I have heard little of publick Affaires since the Battle at *Naseby*, whereat our Army was victorious, & Colonel *Cromwell's* part much noised abroad. *Dr. Sampson* says the *King's* Cause hath suffered more by the Letters found in his Cabinet, the same being now made publick, than by his Defeate: many of his Friends greatly grieved thereby: his Double-dealing and Arrrogance herein proved, during his Treaty with the *Parliament*."

Public troubles multiply; "and woe is me, the Husband whom I love and honour, so mixed up with them, that he must abide by their acts, and share in them."

"Late to-night my dearest Life rode hastily up: he was safe for the present moment, & my first Feeling was of unmix'd Thankfulnesse to Him who permitted us to meete once more. After he had rested awhile, he entered into some Relation of the late Events in the *House*. He and many others have believed that the Powers of the Army endangered the libertie of the Countrey."

"For a time the consideration of our private Affaires was set aside, in the momentous concerns of this distracted Kingdome. Who will arise with a strong minde and pure Heart, to bring these struggles for Freedome, and these conflicting Opinions to a happy issue?"

"My *Husband* leant downe his Head on the table, & hid his Face on his arme, and so remained overwhelmed by the prospect of Misery before us. I ventured not to speake: it is an awfull thing to behold the Spirit of a strong Man shaken, and to hear Sobbes burst forth from his overburthened Heart. At length such violent Shivering seized him that I summoned *Armstrong*. We endeavoured to persuade him to drinke a little Wine, he tooke some, but begged for Water, his Mouth was so parch'd: after some time he went to bed, and desired that *Armstrong* might sit up by him during the first part of the night: his owne Man, having had poore rest of late, he feared to affright mee by his uneasie sleepe. I layd mee downe in the Nurserie, rising oft to see if he slept: toward 3 of the clock he was more quiet: and at 4 I sent *Armstrong* to bed, and tooke his place by my poore *Husband*. I look'd on his altered Countenance, sunk and pale, the faire Brow wrinkled, and his long black Haire now gray and disorder'd: a slight quivering of his lippes and unequall Breathing betoken'd still uneasy rest: my Eyes grew blinded with Teares, and I bent downe and hid my Face on the Pillow beside his. And here to my surprise found I had dropt asleepe: he seeming likely to remaine quiet, I arose softly and stepp'd into my Closet, & there alone, endeavoured to compose my Thoughts."

Lord Willoughby, now opposing the power of the Commons, is impeached, and committed to the Tower.

"Wente downe in a coach to the Parliament-house, and sate therein the while *Henry Willoughby* did try to learne some Newes. After waiting more than an hour, the Lord *Say* came out and inform'd mee a Message had been sent to them by the Commons that morning praying for further Time to be allowed for bringing

up the Impeachment of the seven Lords, which was granted. Hereupon I went backe to the *Tower* to tell my *Husband* of this further Delay: and it was agreed betweene us that it were well I should returne to *Parham* forthwith: and as *Mistresse Gage* did purpose to sett forth early in the forenoon, to morrow, and would goe by *Hengrave*, and had offered to carry mee with her in her coach, it seemed too favourable an opportunitie to be miss'd, although it would make my Departure sudden. Left the *Tower* before 8, the Snow lying thick upon the Street, and with sorrowfull Heart made Preparation for setting forth home-wards. My deare *Husband* maketh light of his situation, and strives to cheere mee, and persuade mee to take Hope in the Exertions now making by a few faithfull Friends of Influence in the *House*, who promise they will doe him what Service they can to pacifie his Adversaries, who are the more sharply bent against him. The chearfull and composed Demeanour he did maintaine served for a time to lighten my Forebodings, and the moment of Parting came on a sudden, and I followed the Guard downe the Staires and under the Arch-way as in a Dreame: the Doore closed after mee: had I in truth left him, my dearest Life, in that dark Prison-house there alone to await his Sentence? I knowe not how I reach'd my Lodging, some kind Friend put mee into a coach and supported mee to my chamber."

"The night was cold, and my condition forlorne and comfortlesse, but I laid me downe on the bed in as much quietnesse of spirit as I well could, feeling that rest was needed to encounter the morrow's Journey from this weary Citie to returne to my poore Children. Reflection on the Encouragement given by divers kind and powerfull Friends was very helpfull, and I slept. The time of our Departure the next day was appoynted at an early houre."

A few short notices now follow, from which we find that exertions are made to convey Lord Willoughby to Holland; and the Diary concludes with the welcome entry, "My dear life, thanks be unto God, is safe in Holland," and with the following most characteristic fragment of a letter.

"Deare Heart,

"After a toylsome Passage we landed at *Dunkirk*: methought the Voyage did too nearly picture my troubled and uncertaine Life. I am well in Health: the Packet came safe to hand, and I was right glad of the Pastie and Wheaten-loaf, after having spent the night on deck, the Victuals on board being ill to eat. The Doublet worked by my sweete Wife did greatly add to my Comfort, as did divers other Matters lovingly remembered by her for my use. Heretofore, though often separated, yet was I in the same Countrie that did containe my little Ones and her who is my Soule's Joy and Consolation, the truest Friend and Counsellor that ever Man had: now each wave carry'd me onward to a strange Land, and never did Absence appear so unsupportable. Kisse our deare Children for me. Bid *Armstrong* be careful to omit nought that I left in his Charge; he would doe well to see *Wingfield* concerning the gray Horse, which should be cared for: my Brother can ride *Berwick*."

We have indeed been copious in our extracts, but this we are sure the reader will gladly pardon. In a day when works of fiction are so characterized by exaggeration, when

"Who seasons the highest is surest to please,"

it is refreshing to meet with a book exhibiting so much simplicity and truthfulness, so much unaffected, but deep feeling, and so beautiful a sense of those daily pleasures and duties, which, because they lie in our pathway, are too apt to be overlooked. It is indeed refreshing to turn from the mawkishly sentimental heroines of many modern novels, to contemplate a character so natural and so excellent, as that of the sweet Lady Willoughby.

THE ECHO.

It is with unfeigned pleasure that, after a silence of a month, I renew my intercourse with my readers, through the "still small voice of print."

During the interval it has been my lot to undergo a fearful wrestling with Death; and although I have, for the present, escaped that fatal back fall which he has thrown so many of his mortal antagonists, enough remains in my shattered frame to remind me of the physical pangs and wrenches of so protracted a contest. Indeed, for the future, as at present, the serious and incurable nature of my complaints will require my whole stock of that cheerful philosophy which it has been my aim to recommend, heretofore, by my pen and personal practice. And, after all (and be this my answer to the correspondent who signs himself "Verity"), it is better to have an enlarged heart than a contracted one; and even such a hæmorrhage as mine than a spitting of spite.

It will doubtless surprise some persons who have read the "Echo," in the last number, to find me so soon resuming the pen and the pencil. The truth is, such exercises are somewhat against the triple injunction of my medical advisers, who strenuously ordered me "to do nothing," but which, on trial, was so hard to do, that a head and hand, unaccustomed to sheer idleness, flew to any work in preference. To the kind, but unknown friends, who have afforded me their sympathy — some, by letter — a few designs and a chapter will be welcome evidences of my recovery, or rather, amendment; for I have not even yet taken a final leave of my physicians, nor made, without reserve, the present, recommended by Macbeth, to the canine race.

THOMAS HOOD.



"PHYSIC TO THE DOGS."

HOOD'S MAGAZINE

AND

Comic Miscellany.

OUR FAMILY:

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER VI.

CATECHISM JACK.

My father was the parish doctor ; and when he entered the surgery, Mr. Postle was making up a parish prescription. A poor, shabbily-dressed woman was waiting for the medicine, and a tall, foolish-looking lad was waiting for the poor woman. She was a widow, as it is called, without incumbrance, and had a cottage and some small means of her own, which she eked out, with the stipend allowed to her by the overseers for taking charge of some infirm or imbecile pauper. The half-witted boy was her present ward.

"It's for Jacobs," said the woman, as my father glanced over the shoulder of his assistant at the prescription. "He gets wus and wus."

"Of course he does," said my father ; "and will, whilst he takes those opium pills."

"So I tell him," said the woman—"with his ague, and in a flat marshy country like this, with water enough about to give any one the hydraulics."

"Hydroptics."

"Well—droptics. You want stimulussess, says I, and not nar—nar—cis—"

"Narcotics."

was done in the dark—into the Hobbes's cottage lost their only child, you know."

The assistant suddenly checked the pestle w
pounding, and looked inquisitively at his principal,
on the idiot boy.

"Well, my lad, and who are you?" inquired my
your name?"

"M. or N.," answered the boy, slowly dragging t
which he had withdrawn from his mouth, with a lo
along the counter.

"Fiddlesticks," exclaimed the woman, giving h
shaking by the shoulder. "You've got another nar

"Yes," drawled the boy, "some call me Catechism

"Ah!—that's an odd name!" said my father.
you?"

"My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism,"

"No such thing, sir," said the woman; "it was
the village, because he was always repeating on it; a
fellow, he can repeat nothing else."

"Then how did he get that?"

"Why you see, sir," said the woman, "between
all along of his godmother."

"Ah!—indeed!" exclaimed my father, pricking
such an appendix to the recent discussion in the
godmother, eh?"

"Yes, Mrs. Tozer as was, for she's dead now, as
mother; and that's how he came into my care. I
first, while he was in petticoats, and so Mrs. Toze
him, and sent him to the infant day-school. She
woman in her religious principles, and so was the and
both made it a great pity for him."

"Ah!—with a concussion of the brain," said my father.

"A contusion of the occiput," added Mr. Postle; "the spinal vertebræ excoriated, of course, and bruises on both patellæ."

"I don't know about that," said the woman, "but he had a lump on the back of his head as big as an egg; the nubbles of his back were rubbed raw, and his two kneepans were as black as a coal. It was thought, too, that his intellex were shook up into a muddle."

"No doubt of it," said my father.

"Well, to go on with Jack. At long and at last he came to, sore enough and smarting, as you may suppose, for he had been carried home to his godmother, and she had rubbed his wounds with sperrits and salt, which had got into the cuts. And now Jack, says she, mark my words, and let them be a warning. It's a judgment of God upon you, says she, for not knowing your Catechism; for if so be you had got it by heart, you would have riz with the rest, and then all this would never have happened. But it's a judgment upon you, says she, and the schoolmistress said the same thing; till between both the poor thing was so scared, he set to work, he did, at his Catechism, and never rested, day or night, till he had got it by heart, as he has now, so thoroughly, you may dodge him, any how, backward or forward, and he won't miss a syllable. And that's how he come by it, Sir, as well as the nickname: for except Catechism, which his head is too full of, I suppose to hold any thing else, he don't know a thing in the world."

"Poor fellow!" said my father, opening one of the surgery drawers.

"Here, Jack, will you have a lozenge?"

"Yes, verily, and by God's help, so I will. And I heartily thank ——"

"There, there, hush! go along with you," said the woman, giving her protégé a push towards the outer door, and then, taking up the medicine, with a nod of acknowledgment to Mr. Postle, and a curtsy to my father, she departed, her forlorn charge clinging to her garments, and muttering scraps of that formula which had procured for him the *sobriquet* of Catechism Jack.

CHAPTER VII.

A PATIENT.

"Poor creature!" muttered my father, carefully fishing a drowning fly out of the inkstand with the feather-end of a pen, and then laying the draggled insect to dry itself on the blotting-paper; "poor harmless, helpless creature!"

The assistant stopped his pounding, and looked inquisitively, first at the speaker, and then at the supposed object of his sympathy.

"I wonder," continued my father, still talking to himself, "if he would like to carry out the medicine?"

Mr. Postle hastily resumed his mortar-practice, with an interjectional "Oh!"

"Job is gone, I suppose?"

Mr. Postle pounded like mad.

"Job is gone, isn't he?" repeated my father.

"Yes, with the best livery."

"In that case," said my father, heedless of the best blue and drab, "we shall want another boy. And I am thinking, Postle, that yonder half-witted fellow might, perhaps, carry the basket as well as another."

"What, the Catechism chap! Why, he's an idiot!"

"Or nearly so," said my father; "and, as such, shut out from the majority of the occupations by which lads of his rank in life obtain a livelihood. The greater the obligation, therefore, to prefer him to one of the few employments adapted to his twilight intelligence."

"What—to carry out the physic?"

"And why not?"

"Nothing," said Mr. Postle, but plying the pestle as if he would have pounded the mortar itself into a powder, "nothing at all. Only when an idiot carries out the physic, it's time to have a lunatic to make it up."

"Phoo! phoo!" said my father, "the boy has arms and legs, and quite head-piece enough for such simple work. At a verbal message, no doubt, he would blunder."

"Yes—wouldn't he?" said Mr. Postle. "Take of compliments and Catechism, each a dram,—mix—shake well up—and administer."

"Like enough," said my father, "if one entrusted any verbal directions to his memory. But he goes on parish errands, and knows every house in the place; and might surely deliver a written label at the right door, as well as a printed notice."

"I wish," said Mr. Postle, gloomily, "there may be any to deliver. Our drugs *are* drugs! We hardly do a powder a day. The business is in a rapid decline, and in another month won't be worth a pinch of magnesia. There's the Great House gone already—and next we shall lose the parish."

"How! — the Great House!" exclaimed my father, with more anxiety and alarm than he had betrayed before about his simious patient. "Is the monkey dead, then?"

"Yes — of bronchitis."

"Poor child!" ejaculated my father.

"I should like to open him," said Mr. Postle.

"I hoped she was provided for," said my father, with a sigh.

"If you mean little Betty," said the assistant, "it is no loss to her, —at least to judge by Mother Hopkins's language."

"Why, what does she say?" asked my father, with a tone and look of unmitigated surprise.

"Only all that is bitter and acid. The ungrateful old hag! I should like to stop her mouth with a pitch-plaster!"

"Hush, hush!" whispered my father; and Postle did hush, for, confirming an old proverb, Mother Hopkins herself hobbled into the surgery, with foul weather on her face. Her lips were compressed — here was a red angry spot in the middle of each sallow cheek, and

anger glimmered in her dark black eye, like a spark in a tinder-box. She spoke harshly, and abruptly.

"I'm come to return the bottles."

"Very good!" said my father, receiving phial after phial from the cankered woman, with as much courtesy and humility as if he had been honoured and obliged by her custom. "I hope the medicine has done you good. How is your lameness?"

"As bad as ever."

"I am sorry to hear it," said my father; "but your complaint is chronic, and requires time for its treatment. By-and-by we shall see an amendment."

"We shall see no such thing," said the Shrew. "I arn't going to take any more physic."

"No!"

"No." It's good for nothing, or you wouldn't give it away gratis."

My father's face flushed slightly — as whose would not? — with so much physic thrown into it, though but metaphorically — all the draughts and embrocations he had supplied her with for the last six months! But the angry hue passed away long ere one could have washed off a splash of rose-water. It was hard for him to be long angry with any one, — impossible, with a decrepit woman, so poor, so sickly, and so ragged. One glance at her cooled the transient heat in an instant. As to speaking harshly to so much wretchedness, he would as soon have poured vitriol on her tatters. His words were still kind, his voice cordial, his smile genial.

"Well! and how is little Betty?"

"Little Betty's at home," replied the woman, with a short sharp twang in her tone that showed the very chord most out of tune had been struck upon. "She might have been at the Great House; — but, thank God, she isn't. She's not an animal!"

"You mean a beast!" suggested my father.

"I say she's not an animal, — nor shan't sleep with one. And a monkey, too — a nasty, filthy, basilicon monkey!"

"Brazilian," muttered my father — "Brazilian."

"Well, Brazilian — an ugly, foreign, outlandish varment!"

"Ah," exclaimed my father, "there's the prejudice! If the creature had been a little dog, now, or a kitten, or a squirrel, you would never have objected to it."

"Squirrels and kittens be hanged!" cried the old woman, waxing in wrath. "It an't the sort of creature — it an't the species; but the detriment to the juvenile constitution. A doctor might know better the vally of the natural warmth of the human body than to have it ex-tracted by a brute beast."

My father was dumbfounded. The charge was so plausible, and couched in such set phrase, that he did not know what to think of it; but appealed, by a perplexed look, to his assistant.

"Prompted — put up to it," muttered Mr. Postle, in a characteristic *aside*. He had turned his back to the counter, and was apparently reading aloud the label on one of the drawers. The woman, in the

mean time, thrust the last phial into the Doctor's hand as hastily as if it burnt her fingers.

"That's all the bottles," she said; "and there," throwing a paper bag on the counter — "there's the corks."

O Ingratitude! — marble-hearted fiend! — how hadst thou possessed that thankless woman with a demon, fit only, like those of old, to inhabit a swine. Weekly, daily, recalling the better times she had known, she had bemoaned her inability to fee a physician, or pay an apothecary; daily, almost hourly, she had lamented the delicate constitution of her little Betty, and the impossibility of furnishing her with a better bed, more generous diet, and warmer garments, — wants for which, by will and deed, her benefactor had endeavoured to provide; and to throw, in his very teeth, all his charitable unguents, lotions, composing draughts, and tonic mixtures, bottles and corks included, and then, in return, to pour on his benevolent head the full phials of her wrath, bitter as the waters of Marah, and corrosive as aqua fortis! It might have moved a saint! But there was in my father's nature so much of the milk of human kindness, and in that milk such a sweet butterish principle, that stirring his temper the wrong way seemed merely to oil it. Thus, when he responded again to the querulous ingrate, it was as the music of an Æolian harp in the parlour-window to a hurdy-gurdy at the area rails.

"Well, well, — we need not quarrel, Mrs. Hopkins. The monkey is dead, and so there is no harm done. I meant all for the best, and hoped to do you a service. Little Betty would have been comfortably lodged, and well fed, and was to be warmly clothed from head to foot."

"Thank ye for nothing!" retorted the snappish one. "I can clothe little Betty myself: and when she famishes for victuals and drink, and not afore, she shall sleep with apes, baboons, and orange outangs."

"Orang," said my father, *sotto voce* — "o — rang."

"Well — horang. I should like to see your own twins, I should, with a great Wild Man of the Woods in their cradle!"

My father's lips moved to reply; but before he could utter a syllable he was forestalled by a noise like the groan of execration which is sometimes heard at a public meeting. All eyes turned in the direction of the sound; and lo! there stood Kezia, her mouth still open and round as that of a cannon, her eyes staring, her cheeks both of a crimson, her arms uplifted, and her hands clenched, with utter indignation. One of her many errands to the surgery had brought her just in time to overhear the atrocious wish that converted her, *pro tempore*, into a she-dragon. In another moment she confronted the cantankerous Mrs. Hopkins, who assumed an attitude of defiance, and plainly showed that if the flesh was weak the spirit was willing enough for the encounter. My father would fain have interfered, but was intreated, by signs and in a whisper, by Postle, not to "check the effervescence."

But the combatants shall have a chapter to themselves.

A FESTIVAL AT BASLE.

STROLLING about the town of Strasburg, towards the latter end of June of the present year, I followed a large concourse of people who were thronging into the cathedral. It was Sunday; and a celebrated preacher was holding forth from the richly-carved pulpit. I was at too great a distance to hear his discourse, and, after taking a glance at whatever seemed worthy of notice, was about to quit the church, when I met a party whose strange costumes attracted my attention. They wore green cloth blouses, open in front and embroidered at the collar and cuffs. On entering the cathedral they had thrown their broad-brimmed grey felt hats over their shoulders, and as they hung suspended by a cord and tassel twisted round them, something in the manner of a dragoon's cap-line, I saw in front of each hat a small shield bearing a painted coat of arms. My first idea was that they were travelling minstrels; but though their dress might have favoured such a supposition, on a nearer inspection the handsome chains and jewellery they wore made me alter my opinion. Indeed there was something in their general air and manner that bespoke them of a better class. They appeared equally versed in French and Italian: but what struck me most in their conversation was an eternal repetition, as it seemed, of the words *Tir Federal*. This reminded me that, on my journey, I had continually heard the same expression, occasionally coupled with *fête magnifique*.

I became curious to know what fête was meant, and would willingly have asked an explanation, if the reserve, that I share with so many of my countrymen, would have allowed me to address a party of strangers. An unexpected occurrence came to my aid. The preacher was at the most moving period of his sermon. By his gestures it was evident he was imploring his auditors to—I could not hear what; but the cambric handkerchiefs at every eye showed that his appeal was deeply felt; when a loud “cock-a-doodle-do!” from behind, caused the whole congregation to turn their heads. “Cock-a-doodle-do!” was repeated, as we stared at a carved and gilded representation of the cock that crowed to St. Peter, strutting up and down at the top of the clock, flapping his wings and crowing most vehemently. The preacher became red as scarlet. The handkerchiefs were again in requisition; but, in spite of the solemnity of the place, I fancied that this time it was to the mouth they were applied, and the strangers and I hastened out of the church.

It was impossible to help laughing at the absurdity of the circumstance.

“From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step,” said one of them, who perceived I was no more able to keep my gravity

than himself. His address at once thawed the ice, and we entered into conversation.

As we walked together towards the hotel, I found that my new acquaintance were Swiss; and seeing they were inclined to be chatty, I asked the meaning of the coat of arms I had observed in their hats.

"They are those of our canton," replied the one who had first spoken. "The white is the federal cross, under which we are all united; and this," pointing to a small blue-and-white cockade, "distinguishes those from Tesino. Of course you are going to the *Tir Federal*?"

Those words again! I began to think they haunted me; but, this time at least, I was determined to have an explanation of their meaning.

"The *Tir Federal*," said he, in answer to my question, "takes place every two years, in one or other of the five principal cantons, and is a general gathering of the Swiss marksmen, under the federal banner. Prizes of value are given to the best shots, and, the meeting over, the flag is left under the guard of the authorities until the ensuing fête. It is then brought, with great ceremony, and placed for the next two years in the care of the town whose turn to hold the festival has arrived. This year it will be held at Basle; and coinciding with the fourth anniversary of the famous battle of *St. Jacques*, which is solemnly kept there every century, it is resolved to celebrate the two together."

"The famous battle of *St. Jacques*!" said I. "I beg your pardon, but I don't think I ever heard of it."

"Never heard of it!" he returned,—"never heard of the Thermopylæ of Switzerland?"

The pride which my new acquaintance felt in the exploits of his countrymen made him willingly comply with my request for information; and from what he told me I have thrown together the following sketch:—

Although nearly a century and a half had elapsed since the Swiss, under their great leader William Tell, had freed themselves from the yoke of Austria, the princes of that house had not relinquished their claims to the confederated provinces. It is true that, weakened by a struggle in which much blood and treasure had been wasted, there were times in which they seemed inclined to leave the cantons to the undisturbed enjoyment of their independence; but no sooner did an opportunity of asserting their ancient pretensions occur than the contest was renewed with fresh vigour.

In 1444 the Emperor Frederic of Austria concluded a treaty with Charles the Seventh, King of France, in which the latter agreed to assist him against his revolted Swiss subjects. Charles was the more willing to comply with this demand, because, having freed his own kingdom from the English, he found himself burthened with a large army for which he had no actual use, and he gladly seized the opportunity of getting rid of the different bands of *routiers*, *ecorceurs*, and brigands of all kinds, that, under the general name of *Armagnacs*, had long been the scourge and terror of every country where they had

shown themselves. The English were not sorry to take advantage of the same means of employing a part of their own disbanded troops; and eight thousand of our countrymen, under Sir Mathew Gough, swelled the French army to fifty thousand men. They were commanded by the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI., and with this formidable force he advanced on Basle, one of the richest and most considerable towns of the Swiss confederation.

The city was in the utmost consternation. Its means of defence were totally inadequate to resist such an army, and capitulation was not to be thought of; for such was the bad faith of those times, that the town of Brugge, which had surrendered a fortnight before to Thomas of Falkenstein, on the most solemn assurance that the war was at an end, had been plundered and burnt, and its garrison put to the sword. After this exploit Falkenstein shut himself up in his castle of Farnsburg; situated a few leagues from Basle. It was strongly built, and so flanked with bastions and towers as to be thought impregnable, but the garrison was without provisions, and unable to hold out against four thousand Swiss, who, burning to revenge the treacherous slaughter of their countrymen at Brugge, had closely invested it. A capitulation, proposed by Falkenstein, was sternly refused, and he was about to surrender at discretion, when the rumour reaching him that the Dauphin and his Armagnacs were marching to his assistance, determined him to hold out.

One night the moon, half emerging from behind a cloud, showed the astonished Swiss the apparition of an armed knight passing through their camp. He rode at a rapid pace on a horse black as jet, which, like its rider, was of gigantic size. Yet no sound was heard as the heavy hoofs trod the rugged way. It was the age of superstition, and the startled soldiers gazed as at a supernatural appearance, till one, bolder than the rest, hurled a javelin at the mysterious visitor. The weapon fell to the ground. The figure vanished; and while they were discussing the strangeness of the circumstance, a red light appeared in the horizon. The whole country was soon illumined with the flames of a distant fire, but no traces of the strange horseman were to be seen. It was John von Richberg, who had undertaken the dangerous mission of communicating the distress of the garrison to the Dauphin. He had wrapt his horses' feet in felt, and had set fire to some deserted farm-houses as a signal to his friends in the Castle that he had passed safely through the enemy's camp.

In the meantime Hermann Seevogel, one of the magistrates of Basle, arrived at the Swiss camp to urge the immediate raising of the siege of Farnsburg, and the departure of the confederates to defend the city.

"If you delay any longer," said he, "you will be too late to enter the town. The enemy is already on his march to surround it."

Full of confidence in their own courage, they rallied him on his fears.

"Ah!" replied the brave citizen, who had often fought at the head of his fellow townsmen, "you must not think me easily frightened. What I tell you is too true: but I will remain, and you shall see if I am a coward."

A warm debate was the result of Seevogel's mission. The majority protested against relinquishing the siege at the very time the Castle was expected to surrender. On the other hand, many who were citizens of Basle urged the necessity of aiding their friends. With a view of satisfying both parties, it was resolved to send a detachment of sixteen hundred men to assist in the defence of the city. Two cardinals, who were hastening to quit a town, the ruin of which appeared certain, met this gallant band, singing national airs, and marching as if to a fête. In vain they were told that their enemies were at least thirty thousand strong, and that if they attempted to defend the city against such a multitude, not a man would escape.

"Well, then," answered the Swiss (a reply often quoted since), "we will bequeath our souls to God, and our bodies to the Armagnacs!"

On their arrival they found the city already invested. The army of the Dauphin had passed the small river Birse above Basle, and occupied all the villages round. He had received information that the Swiss were on their way to attack him, and, by the advice of John von Richberg, who had often witnessed the panic into which the extraordinary impetuosity of their attack was apt to throw the most tried soldiers, the troops were separated into several divisions, so that, should the first be defeated, barrier after barrier might be opposed to the progress of the confederates.

The greater part of the army was encamped on the left side of the river, while the divisions of the Sieur de Beuil and Count de Chabanne formed the advanced guard on the right bank. It was here that, at eight o'clock in the morning of the 26th of August, 1444, the brave band of Swiss marched to attack the French. At the very first shock the troops of De Beuil took to flight. Their commander, astonished at the vigour of the attack, retreated on De Chabanne, who, with a far more numerous body of soldiers, was stationed behind a strong entrenchment. In vain Seevogel, who commanded the Swiss, endeavoured to restrain the impetuosity of his men. Neither the fear of an enemy, formidable from his numbers, nor even the difficulty of attacking a fortified position, could damp their ardour. They rushed forward, and, in an incredibly short time, an army, counting as many thousands as that of the Swiss did hundreds, was seen flying in disorder; the fugitives pursued, and struck down, without mercy, by these intrepid mountaineers.

Once more their captains tried to make them listen to the voice of prudence. They were masters of the enemy's camp. Banners, horses, cannon, baggage, all were in their hands; and, from the brow of the hill, they could see the Armagnacs completely defeated, striving to reach the opposite side of the river.

Well would it have been for them if they could have remained contented with their success; but the thought of their friends in Basle, who, in the extremity of danger looked forward to their arrival as the only hope of safety, determined them to advance.

Animated by the sight of the main body encamped on the opposite

bank of the river, they plunged in, and, in the very teeth of the cannon, drawn up to intercept their passage, reached the other side.

The inhabitants of Basle, who witnessed the combat from their ramparts, observing the great disparity of force on the side of their defenders, despatched three thousand citizens to their aid. The Dauphin, perceiving the manœuvre, sent a strong body of men to intercept them. This detachment advanced towards the gate of St. Alban's, by which the Bâlois had made their sortie, with a view of cutting off the communication of the latter with the city. The alarm of the townspeople was now at its height. The approach of the Armagnacs, so justly dreaded for their cruelty, spread universal consternation. The sentinels stationed on the watch-towers gave notice of the danger; trumpets were sounded and alarm-bells rung, as signals to the citizens to return; and messengers were despatched to John Rott, the burgomaster, who commanded them to recall him to the defence of the town. He reluctantly obeyed; and thus were the Swiss deprived of every hope of succour; for, though the bold attempt to pass the river succeeded, on arriving at the opposite side they had found it impossible to form themselves in order of battle.

John von Richberg, with sixteen hundred German cavalry, and eight thousand of the best French troops, attacked them as they landed, and in a short time they were separated into two parts; one of which, surrounded on every side, continued to resist a force ten times greater than their own, till killed to a man.

The other division had made strenuous efforts to join the Bâlois; but, perceiving that the attempt of the latter to assist them by a sortie had failed, this party, whose number did not amount to above five hundred men, entrenched themselves in the burying-ground and chapel of St. Jacques. Here they made the most extraordinary resistance to the overwhelming force brought against them. Three times did the Armagnacs advance to the charge, and three times were they repulsed with severe loss. At length cannon was planted against the walls of the churchyard, the chapel was set on fire, and the French and Germans, entering in numbers by the breaches, fought hand to hand with the few Swiss who still remained alive. Pierced with arrows, defending themselves with the weapons plucked from their own wounded limbs, still these gallant men were unsubdued. Round the body of every Swiss lay the corpses of five or six of the Armagnacs; and it was not till after ten hours of combat, and the loss of eight thousand men and eleven hundred horses, that the Dauphin could call himself victor.

While the French commanders, masters at length of this hardly-contested field, admired the courage of their fallen foes, the German knights were not ashamed to insult the few who yet remained alive. Bernhardt Mönch, arriving when the battle was at an end, galloped exultingly over the bodies of his fallen enemies, and passed the spot where Arnold Schick, one of the captains of the canton of Uri, lay breathing his last.

"The odour of this blood is delicious," said the former. "I could fancy myself in a garden of roses!"

"Smell this one!" said the dying man, raising a heavy stone, and, by a last effort, hurling it at his foe. It struck Mönch on the forehead, fractured his skull, and he died in a few hours.

It is satisfactory to know that the gallant resistance of the Swiss confederates saved their country. Basle surrendered, but on favourable terms; and the admiration felt by the Dauphin for the heroic character of the Swiss induced him to contract a close alliance with the cantons. When he became king, under the name of Louis XI, his first care was to engage a battalion in the service of France. His successors continued the practice, until the fatal 10th of August, 1792, showed that the descendants of the heroes of St. Jacques had not degenerated from the courage and fidelity of their ancestors.

Seeing that I was much interested by all I had heard, my new acquaintances urged me to accompany them to Basle. They told me that, in consequence of the double anniversary, the concourse of people was expected to be ten times greater than had ever yet been known. That the Swiss had flocked from all parts of Europe, and even from America; and that these latter had brought, as an offering from their countrymen who were unable to come, a richly inlaid rifle as one of the prizes to be shot for. I was easily persuaded, and we set off the next morning.

On arriving at Basle we found the town gay with preparations for the coming fête. The bells rang out a merry peal, and bands of music paraded the streets, which had been planted with trees for the occasion. Long garlands of flowers, fastened to the houses on each side, were suspended across, and from the middle of each festoon hung a shield with an appropriate device. Under this roofing of brilliant colours we passed to our hotel. The dinner-bell was just ringing as I took my place among a hundred-and-forty guests. The soup was excellent, but scalding hot; and while waiting for it to cool I was amused at the ingenious contrivance by which my right-hand neighbour (a burly German) contrived to satisfy his longing to fall to. Seizing a couple of wine-glasses, he poured the boiling liquid into one, and passing it a few times from one to the other, drank it off in consecutive glassfuls. As this was a manœuvre quite new to me, I concluded fate had placed me by one of those original minds that scoff at forms, and I resolved to watch his proceedings. I was soon rewarded for my trouble. On a dish of cauliflowers being placed before him, he appropriated the whole to himself, and emptying a tureen of melted butter over it, with the help of a table-spoon, he swallowed it all with marks of the liveliest satisfaction. I confess this last dish, however it might agree with his stomach, was rather too rich for mine, and I resolved to confine my attention to what was passing on my left; a resolution I was confirmed in when inadvertently turning, I saw my fat friend pointing a large lead pencil, which immediately served him for a tooth-pick.

I mention these table anecdotes for the benefit of any who may be collecting materials for new "German experiences," leaving it to them to determine whether the traits I have mentioned are national or individual.

The evening was passed in strolling about the town. From the farthest boundaries of the little state, the richer farmers and landed proprietors had thronged with their wives and daughters, dressed in the smart costumes of their cantons; and I thought, as I looked at the astonishing variety of dresses and the happy faces around, that it would be difficult to find a more pleasing or animated scene.

I was awakened next morning by salvos of artillery, and hurrying out of the hotel, met the procession with which the ceremonies commenced. A company of infantry, marching to military music, preceded a herald dressed in the costume of the middle ages. He wore the colours and carried the banner of the town, and the handsomest man in the canton having been selected for the purpose, his appearance was really striking. After him came four attendants, bearing a massive silver goblet of the most quaint and antique form and workmanship. Heralds in showy scarlet dresses, followed by the authorities of the city, came next; then, preceded by their different flags, the companies of marksmen from the twenty-two cantons, a numerous and imposing body, and a battery of artillery brought up the rear.

The site of the battle of St. Jacques was about half a mile from the town, and here a tribune had been erected, in front of which was a marble tablet with the following inscription:—

“OUR SOULS TO GOD, OUR BODIES TO THE ENEMY.
HERE, ON THE 26TH AUGUST, 1444,
FELL, FIGHTING AGAINST THE FRENCH AND AUSTRIANS,
SIXTEEN HUNDRED CITIZENS FROM THE CONFEDERATED SWISS CANTONS.
THEY WERE NOT OVERCOME TILL EXHAUSTED BY VICTORY.
THIS TRIBUTE TO THEIR BRAVERY WAS ERECTED
BY THE BURGHERS OF BASLE,
THE 30TH JUNE, 1844.”

The magistrates of Basle, accompanied by a deputation of the marksmen, and followed by the cup-bearer, mounted the tribune; the rest arranged themselves around; and the grand federal banner being raised under a salute from the cannon, the band played a national air, and the spectators greeted it with loud cheers. A speech from the Burgomaster welcoming the strangers, during which he drank to the prosperity of the confederated provinces, was enthusiastically received, and followed by a hymn sung by the whole assembly. This done, the cannon once more saluted the national flag, and the procession, returning through the town, proceeded to a plain where the shooting was to take place. This immense space, capable of containing fifty thousand persons, was entered by a triumphal arch. It was completely inclosed by wooden erections, in the Gothic style, and comprised a shooting-gallery, dining-room, coffee-houses, &c. &c.

In the centre stood an elegant pavilion a hundred feet high. Its base formed a federal cross, and in the four end compartments numerous prizes were displayed. Among these was an antique chased silver waiter, valued at two hundred pounds sterling, and a rifle richly inlaid with gold, the latter the gift of an English nobleman.

In the middle of the pavilion was a spiral staircase, which, passing

two galleries, led to the top, where stood a colossal figure of Herman Seevogel, the commander of the Swiss at the battle of St. Jacques. Here, amid the firing of guns and ringing of bells, the federal flag was placed in the right hand of the statue, whose left arm, raised high in the air, seemed beckoning his countrymen to range themselves once more under his banner. Deafening shouts from the spectators seemed to answer the appeal; and the authorities, descending to the first gallery, received the flags of the several cantons, each of which was presented with an appropriate speech. The Swiss with whom I had become acquainted at Strasburg was very eloquent on the occasion; his harangue melting himself and his hearers into tears. The twenty-two banners were then placed round the gallery, where, emblematic of the constitution of the republic, they waved under the protection of that held by Seevogel; and shortly afterwards the sister-flags, as those from the smaller towns are called, were seen fluttering from the lower balcony.

The effect of this pavilion of flags was very elegant; and I may mention that the enthusiasm of the spectators had something besides patriotism to sustain it, for underneath was a cellar containing six thousand bottles of wine, which during the ceremony was distributed to the confederates. This concluded, the visitors partook of a handsome dinner, given by the corporation in a room five or six hundred feet long, occupying nearly one side of the square. Tables prepared for five thousand guests (on which were damask cloths woven for the occasion) may give an idea of the magnitude of the entertainment; and many patriotic toasts and sentiments accompanied the bumpers of *Schwitzer blut*, or Swiss blood, a wine that takes its name from growing on the field of battle.

At the risk of being thought to enter into too trivial details, I must give a sketch of the kitchen, where the preparations were on a scale that would put a Lord Mayor's dinner to the blush. It was a building two hundred and forty feet long by fifty wide. Sixteen copper kettles, of a size that might lead you to believe yourself in an extensive brewery, were appropriated to the making of soup. Three monster ovens, twenty-four stoves, and a fountain spouting in the midst, reminded me, I hardly knew why, of the wedding-dinner of Prince Riquet with the Tuft. The latter feast was certainly on a much smaller scale, but the fountain playing here gave a touch of fairyland to the whole. The provisions, however, were of that substantial nature that at once recalls us from poetry to prose. During the eight days the *fête* was to last they had contracted to receive, per diem, 1500 lbs. of beef, 2500 lbs. of mutton and veal, 5000 lbs. of bread, besides vast quantities of poultry and vegetables. Under the kitchen was a cellar, containing one hundred and fifty thousand bottles of wine.

The following morning, accompanied by my friends, I paid a visit to the shooting gallery. It was a building nine hundred feet long, having in the centre a raised platform, where the committee sat. Tickets for the shooting were here given, and strings leading to the seventy-two targets enabled a marker, stationed at each, to send notice back to the umpires of the distance of every shot from the

centre of the bull's eye. Fifty men were constantly employed in casting bullets, and two thousand stalls were erected for the accommodation of loading. Each rifle, when charged, was handed to the marksman, who awaited it at a small window facing the targets.

The Swiss rifle is some pounds heavier than an English musket, the stock long, and the butt finished off with a sort of half-moon, which fits to the shoulder and under the arm. This serves, when levelled, to keep the point from dropping. Reversing the usual position of rifle-shooting, the body of the marksman is here thrown back, his left elbow firmly planted on his hip, and supporting his hand, which forms a rest for the rifle. While in this position, some one behind sets the hair-trigger and puts in motion a small pendulum fixed on the stock and corresponding to the sight. This prevents him from seeing the object aimed at, until completely covered by his piece. It is therefore as requisite to possess a steady hand as a quick eye.

My new friend seemed to have both in perfection. After firing about a dozen shots, all of which were good, he hit the very centre of the bull's eye three times in succession. A loud shout followed this exploit. He was lifted on the shoulders of his friends, and, preceded by a band of music, was carried in triumph to the pavilion, where one of the committee presented him with a silver goblet filled with champagne.

In this way several of the best shots were, as we should say, "chaired." Among them was an English nobleman, so ardent a lover of the sport, that he has had himself naturalized Swiss, in order to obtain the right of shooting for the first prize, a privilege confined to Swiss citizens. He was the object of general observation during the week that the fête lasted, having no less than eight men employed in loading his pieces. He fired generally five or six hundred shots every day.

After the distribution of the prizes, the different bands of marksmen again fetched their respective banners, which were returned with as much ceremony as they had been received with. As each deputation marched to the pavilion, the principal magistrate made a speech congratulating them on the proofs given, that the marksmen of Switzerland had not degenerated from their ancient renown. They then drank from the goblet a parting wish for their prosperity, and with a solemn recommendation to remember their duties as citizens, placed the flag in the hand of the person privileged to receive it. With many embraces, the meeting then separated, the band of each company playing the national air of their canton as they marched from the field.

Thus closed the festival of St. Jacques.

SONNET

TO A SONNETTEER.

ON ! not for cities' smoke and sultry toil
 Is the fresh glory of this summer's day :
 Haste, spread thy wings, and from the vain turmoil
 Spring like freed bird from prison-cage away !
 What halcyon life awaits thee in the woods,
 The tangled deep luxuriance of green shade,
 Where the mind revels in those rainbow moods
 By thousand links of thought and feeling made !
 Go, fling thee down in some sequester'd nook
 Where the glad stream in checquer'd sunlight flows :
 No need hast thou of comrade or of book,
 Whose heart responsive still to Nature glows :
 Let but a wild flower at thy feet be springing,
 And all thy poet's soul will break forth into singing !

GERTRUDE.



"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
 Than were dreamt of in your philosophy."

THE UNKNOWN SINGER :

A MYSTIFICATION.

I WAS rambling through the Rhine country. A pleasant country it is to wander in during the summer months, when the vines are green, the corn as yet uncut, the trees in the orchards laden with fruit, the woods and hedgerows perfumed with flowers ; when the sun shines every day and all day, and the sky, if not of so deep a blue as that of Naples or Cadiz, is yet as clear and cloudless. With a compact knapsack on my back and a stout stick in my hand, possessed likewise of what somebody has called the two requisites for getting through the world, a light heart and a thin pair of—un-nameables, I strolled along over hill and dale, visiting old castles and exploring ruins of every kind, enjoying the fresh breath of nature, and *me faisant du bon sang*, as the French say, for twelve months' consumption.

Although occasionally compelled to repair to some town to which my portmanteau had been forwarded, I did this as little as possible ; but, on the contrary, avoided all places where I might expect to find a crowd. I had long been of opinion that the greatest objection to the country about the Rhine was the uninteresting and unintellectual character of its inhabitants, people who pass their time in feeding, smoking, and taking off their hats to one another. Boors for boors, I prefer those who inhabit a hamlet to those who dwell in a city ; the former, at least, are in their place ; and I accordingly so arranged my route as to pass the night usually in some small village. My custom was to start at daybreak, walk and explore till ten or eleven o'clock, rest during the heat of the day in a village inn or roadside tavern, and towards evening resume my march for four or five hours. My ramble might have been rendered more agreeable by the society of one or two pleasant companions, but I had not happened to meet with such. As may be supposed, therefore, my opportunities of conversation during my excursion had been few, limited to an occasional chat with a village priest or schoolmaster, or some peasant more intelligent than his fellows, from whom I obtained details and legends concerning the ruins and antiquities plentifully scattered over the Rhine provinces.

On a piping hot morning towards the commencement of July I was walking along a country road in Rhenish Bavaria. It was the warmest day we had had that summer ; the dust on the road seemed to burn one's feet ; the heat might be seen in the air, dancing and flickering over the fields ; the sun was glaring out with tremendous power, and the walnut and apple trees planted along the side of the lane I was following afforded but a very imperfect shelter from its rays. It was

considerably past eleven, the hour at which I usually came to a pause, but I had been misinformed as to distances, or else had taken a wrong turn, and the village at which I intended to make my mid-day halt had not appeared. It was with no small satisfaction, therefore, that I at last came in sight of a house by the roadside, which, from its being larger than the generality of the peasants' cottages and farm-houses, I supposed to be an inn. I was not mistaken. On reaching the house I beheld a grey board swinging above the door, on which some village Landseer had depicted a creature with four legs and a tail, which might have been intended for any thing, from a rabbit to a rhinoceros. The painter, however, had been so considerate as to add an inscription, by which the passer-by was instructed of the intention of his hieroglyphic. The Red Lion was the quadruped under whose special protection had been placed the hostelry which I now entered.

The inn was not a remarkably good or large one, nor did its customers seem numerous, the only living creature I encountered, besides dogs, chickens, and children, being a buxom peasant-woman, apparently the hostess, who, on my inquiring if I could have some refreshment, replied in the affirmative, and asked me where I would choose to be served, in the *stube* or in the garden. The *stube*, of which she opened the door, was a dingy little room, smelling of stale tobacco-smoke, and by no means of an inviting appearance. I begged therefore to be shown the garden. This was a plot of ground of about half an acre, in the corner of which, nearest the house, stood a sort of bower, formed of two rows of poles supporting a lattice-work, and overgrown with vines and honeysuckles so as to be impervious to the sun. The garden itself teemed with roses and other flowers, over which hundreds of butterflies were fluttering, and the inhabitants of half a dozen bee-hives humming and buzzing. The appearance of the place was so pleasant, so different from the smoky narrow interior of the house, that I immediately established myself at the table in the arbour, and requested mine hostess to bring thither whatever she might be able to provide for the refreshment of my inward man.

Some *wurst* or sausage, bread, cheese, and fruit, and for potables some very tolerable wine, were soon placed before me. My breakfast had been slight and my walk a long one, and I did ample justice to the provender. I finished eating, poured out the last glass from my moderate-sized bottle, and leaned back against the side of the arbour. The heat was really stifling; there was not a breath of air, and although I had disencumbered myself of my blouse and neckcloth, I still found it impossible to keep cool. I was ruminating as to the probability of being able to proceed with my journey before nightfall without risking a fever, when I heard a step approaching the arbour. A stranger entered, made me a low bow, and seated himself upon a bench, nearly opposite to me, but yet at a sufficient distance not to appear intrusive.

The new comer was a man of thirty-five or forty years of age, who at the first glance struck me as being an excellent type of his countrymen. He was about the middle height, square built, with features massive but not coarse; the dark grey eye—a sort of blackish grey—of central Germany; and light brown hair, which, when he took off his

hat on entering, I saw was very scanty on the top of his head. He was what would be called dull-looking; but yet, on examining him more narrowly, there was a certain degree of observation and of slow keenness (if those two words will bear connecting) in the expression of his eye and the lines round the corners of his mouth. He was evidently not one of those men with whom, as a French writer observes, the blade wears out the scabbard, the activity of the mind fatigues and preys upon the body. Placid contentment sat upon his broad smooth forehead and plump unwrinkled cheeks, while his comfortable degree of wholesome *embonpoint* indicated a regular appetite, and, probably, a good digestion. His dress was plain, unnoticeable either for cut or materials; in his hand he carried a pipe on the large china bowl of which was painted a portrait of Schiller, and from which he puffed forth enormous volumes of smoke. As to what the man was, it was hard to decide. He might be a brewer or a baron, a count or a cow-keeper, a tailor or a professor of law or physic. It is astonishing how little difference there is in many parts of Germany in the appearance and manners of those various classes.

I had been particularly solitary during the preceding three days, and had scarcely exchanged a word with anybody. I had had no *rencontres*; not so much as a travelling student, or an Englishman with one of Murray's crimson-covered guide-books in his hand (the invariable sign, by the by, of the English tourist) had crossed my path. I was not sorry to exercise my ears and tongue a little, and accordingly entered into conversation with the stranger. He replied civilly to an enquiry I made of him concerning some ruins which I had passed on the road, but either from indolence or inability did not seem disposed to do much in the way of conversation, beyond answering my questions. Little by little, however, I succeeded in drawing him out, and the conversation became sustained and interesting. It turned upon the innumerable legends and supernatural histories connected with the Rhine country, with its ancient castles and convents, its rivers and its mountains.

"The recital of these strange old traditions," I remarked, "has become almost a trade in these provinces, especially since the Rhine has been so great a resort of tourists. Unfortunately for one's belief in their authenticity, I have frequently found a great diversity in the legends told of one and the same place. The stories vary continually, and every new cicerone has a new tale to tell. I suspect there is a regular manufactory of Rhine legends, the same as of antiquities at Rome and Naples or musket balls and grape-shot at Waterloo. I am sorry to entertain that belief, for I could have wished to think that the immense absurdity of some of those legends was to a certain degree rendered respectable by their antiquity."

"You are partly right," replied the stranger. "If the traditions you allude to are not entirely of modern manufacture, they have yet been so altered in passing through the hands, or rather lips, of numerous narrators, that they frequently retain little of the original story. This is the natural course of things and was scarcely avoidable. Germany, however, is unquestionably the land of superstition, and her

stores of that kind are so rich and varied that it is unnecessary to have recourse to invention to augment them. Even in the present day things happen in this country which occur nowhere else, and that hardly admit of explanation. An adventure happened to myself some few years back, the circumstances of which I have never been able to account for without admitting agencies that have long been treated as fabulous. You seem curious in such matters, and if you choose to listen I will tell you the story, premising that I relate the circumstances as they occurred, and without pretending to explain them. You will draw your own inferences."

My attention was roused by the stranger's words. In the nineteenth century, what could be the adventure or incident that was inexplicable by other than the supernatural agency to which he plainly referred? I had little doubt that I should find some more commonplace way of accounting for whatever wonders my new acquaintance might relate. My curiosity was nevertheless strongly excited, and I begged to be favoured with the narrative alluded to. He refilled his pipe, and then, without farther prelude, at once commenced.

Not many years have elapsed, he began, since I had occasion to make a journey in Franconia. I stopped one afternoon in the town of G—, and after my dinner the waiter brought me the playbill for that evening. It announced the performance of Meyerbeer's celebrated opera, *Robert the Devil*, for the first time in G—. I immediately hurried to the theatre, before which an immense crowd was already assembled, awaiting the opening of the doors that at last took place. With great difficulty I succeeded in obtaining a seat next to a young Parisian, a traveller like myself.

The curtain rose. Every neck was outstretched, every eye fixed on the stage, every ear on the alert, in order not to lose a note of so beautiful an opera. Bertram made his entrance—he opened his mouth to sing; but not a sound came forth. Robert asked him in a low tone if he had forgotten his part. Bertram shook his head, made another attempt to begin, but in vain. He threw himself into a chair, and made a sign that he was unable to sing.

"He can't sing!" shouted some fifty farmers and other persons from the surrounding country, who had been waiting the whole afternoon at the theatre door, and now occupied the front rows in the pit. "He can't sing! What's the meaning of that? We've come half a score miles to hear *Robert the Devil*, and hear it we must!"

Thus urged, Bertram made another effort. He rose from his chair; the orchestra, which had hitherto been silent, struck up. Bertram again strove to sing. Not a note. The conductor of the orchestra turned round to the audience.

"A sudden extinction of voice," said he.

"An excuse! He must sing!" vociferated a number of young men in the pit, flourishing their canes in a threatening manner.

A gentleman in one of the boxes stood up, and advised that a doctor should be sent for.

"Is there a doctor present?" demanded several voices.

Nobody answered.

"Send for Doctor Stern!" cried some one, and a messenger was immediately dispatched.

Doctor Stern was sitting with some friends over his wine, but on hearing how urgent the case was, he tossed off a glass of Johannisberg, and hurried to the theatre. He felt Bertram's pulse, examined his throat, and at last said very gravely,

"The emotion attendant on an appearance in a new part has affected the nervous system. The man wants repose and a sea-bath." And with these words he left the stage.

"What!" shouted the pit, furious at its disappointment. "Repose? A sea-bath? There is no sea here! And if there were, we should not hear Robert the Devil a bit the more! We must have Robert the Devil!"

A thousand voices echoed the words. "Robert the Devil!" shouted the entire audience, whistling, yelling, stamping, and thumping their sticks on the ground. "Robert the Devil!" And at last, for shortness' sake, they abbreviated it, and there was a universal cry for "The Devil!"

The manager came forward, and bowed thrice. Silence was obtained: the audience were all attention.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said he, "a singer who happens to be passing through G—, and to be present to-night in the theatre, has kindly offered, in order that you should not be disappointed, to take the part of Bertram. I am most delighted that——"

He was interrupted by thunders of applause, and retired.

The new Bertram was received with a round of cheering.

"Ha, ha!" cried my neighbour, the Parisian, who was one of those persons who know everybody and everything. "I have seen him before. He sang once at the Feydeau in Zampa. He is nothing remarkable, but he has come *apropos* to help us out of our difficulties."

In the first act the new Bertram was tolerably successful, although it was probably as much his complaisance as his talent that the audience applauded. At every pause in the music the Frenchman had something to say.

"Ah! That is not Levasseur! Very different from Levasseur! Did you ever hear Levasseur's Bertram? This Florival, or whatever his name is, has nothing of the demon about him. And then only look at his dress! You should see Levasseur, how ——"

An old gentleman sitting behind us interrupted him sharply.

"My good Sir, do leave us at peace with your Levasseur! We come here to listen to the opera, and not to your chatter!"

The second act began. After the duet, when Bertram sings "Prince of fallen Angels," a feeling of terror seemed to seize the audience. There was something wonderfully energetic and startling in the voice of the singer. The chorus behind the scenes was also unusually powerful, and seemed to roar and heave like a subterranean hurricane. An invisible orchestra appeared to accompany the visible one, and to blow with a giant's breath into the horns and trombones. From time to time the conductor looked round him, pale and confused, as if he would fain have asked whence came this horrible din;

but it was everywhere, and he could discover no point from which it more particularly proceeded. Clear and distinct above every thing rose Bertram's voice, now in soft and flattering tones as he strove to win Alice to his purpose ; then again in accents of the most cutting scorn, but ever tuneful and harmonious. Like a peal of thunder he gave out the words "Now art thou mine !" and the burst was followed by a hissing rushing noise, like the flight of a shell through the air. Alice lay under Bertram's outstretched right hand, like the dove beneath the claw of the vulture. The actress, a gay coquettish creature, felt as she had never before felt, seized with a nameless sensation of horror and alarm. She forgot that it was mere acting — the breath and voice of Bertram seemed to have fascinated her. She uttered a piercing scream, not such a one as actresses study for stage effect, but horror-stricken and agonised as that of a mother who sees her infant crushed beneath waggon-wheels. She sank fainting on the steps of the cross. All the women amongst the audience rose from their seats, pale and trembling, and clung to the arms of their male companions as though for protection against some imminent peril. Many wept, others tried to smile, some fell into hysterics. "Down with the curtain !" was the cry ; and the curtain fell.

"Very strange !" said the young Frenchman to me ; "the ladies must be extremely nervous and susceptible to be thus affected by a bit of stage trick. If this man produces such an effect, what would it be if Levasseur — ?"

This time he interrupted himself. Most men have a sort of dislike to talk amongst a crowd of silent persons ; and the silence around us was as great as if the theatre had been a churchyard. For some time nobody seemed inclined to speak of what had just passed ; and when the Parisian was silent, the stillness was unbroken even by a whisper. The panic was of some duration ; but at last, as if the audience were awakening from a trance, there were movements in the pit and boxes, and conversation was resumed. Every one agreed that the opera had lost nothing by the substitution of the stranger for the usual performer. Even the nervous ladies who had become hysterical at the scene between Bertram and Alice forgot their alarm, and were loud in admiration of the singer, whose voice and acting were both praised to the skies.

The curtain rose for the next act ; the scene was the burial-place of the nuns. What now took place was truly of a nature to make the blood run cold. If I were to live a hundred years, that evening would be present in my memory to the last day of my existence. Bertram entered. It may have been fancy, but I could have sworn that he had increased in stature, and was full the head taller than in the preceding act. The stage was darkened, and the body of the house being, as is not unusual in our German theatres, only lighted by a solitary chandelier, which was now also shaded, the whole theatre remained plunged in a gloomy mysterious sort of twilight. Through the darkness Bertram's eyes were visible, gleaming with a greenish light like two stars through the gloom of a December night. The same extraordinary power as in the preceding act was again observable in the *tra* ; a thundering, crashing, deafening clang of

instruments, amidst which the conductor remained with his wand suspended in the air, as though stupified with astonishment. A multitude of notes were heard, not set down in the opera, but which, notwithstanding, chimed in, in some extraordinary manner, with the music. Equally astonished with their conductor, the musicians ceased playing; but, nevertheless, Bertram sang the invocation, accompanied, as it seemed, by unseen instruments. The sounds which issued from his throat shook the nerves of his hearers as a thousand gongs and cymbals might have done, and vibrated through the house like the echoes of a mighty bell that has just been struck by the hammer. When the nuns appeared and ranged themselves around Bertram, they looked pale under their rouge; and their teeth chattered as in deadly fear. The strongest impression seemed to be made upon the abbess, who appeared unable to approach the singer; and when she attempted to do so, sank fainting to the ground, wounding herself severely in her fall against the cross that was suspended from her neck. She was laid bleeding and senseless upon the grave in which she had recently reposed in counterfeited death.

Her terror seemed to communicate itself like an infection to the other nuns. They endeavoured to fly, but were unable. The same sort of anxious uneasiness which one experiences during a horrid dream, when we feel ourselves in imminent peril, but are unable to move or cry out, now spread itself over the whole audience. The darkness, Bertram's terrific voice, the gleaming of his eyeballs, the group of trembling nuns, the double row of graves, and finally, a sort of choking mist that seemed to fill the house, formed a combination which terrified the auditory, even to the boldest amongst them. At last a few persons left the theatre, and this was the signal for a general rush to the doors. The panic-stricken women hurried out of their boxes; some were carried out fainting; children cried and screamed after their lost parents. During the tumult the curtain fell, but with a noise that resembled the crash of a mighty oak struck down by a thunderbolt, and the whole house shook to its foundations as with the shock of an earthquake. The crush in the lobbies and at the doors was frightful; one would have thought that the house was on fire in twenty places, and that every one was striving to escape from suffocation or the flames. In an incredibly few minutes the theatre was empty.

The young Parisian was still at my side as we followed the stream of fugitives; he appeared unwilling to quit the performance. Under the portico of the theatre he paused, and said to me, whilst arranging his coat and cravat, which had been crushed in the crowd,

"What is the matter with them? They all run away as if possessed, and there are still two acts to see. Ha! I have thought of something. I will invite the Signor Bertram to drink a bowl of punch with us. I know him personally; his name is — *Sacré!* have I forgotten it already? — Florval or Florival. He cannot hold a candle to Levasseur in this part, but still he is much improved since I last saw him. Come, I will introduce you to him; he is a very pleasant companion."

I felt rather curious to see something more of the singer, and I followed the Parisian behind the scenes. There all was silence and

solitude. The young Frenchman called out, "Florival, Florival! where are you? Here are friends and amateurs who wish to ask you to supper." Just then the old stage carpenter passed near us, with a lantern in his hand. "He is no doubt undressing in his room," said the Parisian, and calling to the carpenter, he asked him where Signor Florival's dressing-room was.

"Do you mean the gentleman who sang the part of Bertram?" said the man.

"The same."

"Then it's no use seeking him here; he disappeared immediately after the third act."

"Disappeared!"

"As I tell you, sir. We looked for him everywhere, and the more so as we are in the habit of receiving a present from new actors. There was not a sign of him to be seen. As he came, so he went. I am not to say easily frightened, but if that man played here often, I must give up my place. God save us! and good night to ye, gentlemen."

And the old man walked away, shaking his head and muttering to himself. We followed the light of his lantern in order to find our way out, and as we passed through the corridors we saw drops of moisture hanging on the walls, like the sweat beads on a human forehead. The atmosphere of the theatre seemed heavy and oppressive, and I drew a deep breath of relief when I at last found myself in the open air. The Parisian took things much more lightly, and laughed at the proneness of the Germans to indulge in the fantastical and romantic.

"These Germans," said he, taking my arm familiarly, and entirely forgetting that he was speaking to one of that nation; "these Germans are extraordinarily greedy of the marvellous, and trace out the supernatural in the commonest occurrences of life. It would by no means astonish me if they were to discover a Mephistopheles in the performer of Bertram. They are not accustomed to see good characteristic acting. If this Florival makes such an impression on the worthy burgesses and country gentlemen of Franconia, what would it be if they heard Levasseur? Florival performs the devil very decently, but of Levasseur one may say that he is the devil himself! It is not the Germans, however, but their poets and writers who have to answer for these tendencies to the supernatural. We in France are now well acquainted with German literature, and are able to form as correct a judgment of it as of our own, and we consider that Schiller and Goethe have much to answer for in this respect. Werter has been the origin of a deal of false sentimentality, and Faust the cause that the Germans imagine a Mephistopheles behind every post and pillar, and a demon in every poodle-dog. Kant, Kotzebue, Hoffmann, Fichte, and a host of others, have written exaggerated stuff which the Germans read with awe and trembling, but which we Frenchmen laugh at. We do not deny their talent for philosophy — it is the fashion now to quote the Germans in that respect; and through the tours which several of our clever writers have made and published we

have learnt much concerning Germany and its inhabitants which has inspired us with a certain degree of respect."

After this fashion did my new friend go on chattering nearly all supper-time. There was so much amiability and *bonhomie* about him that I listened with pleasure to his perorations, far better amused than if I had endeavoured to correct the numerous errors into which he had fallen respecting my country and countrymen. I had promised to pass the following day with my friend Baron von Furstheim, whose country residence was within a short distance of the town. I told my Parisian of this engagement, and offered, if he chose, to take him with me. He willingly accepted my proposal. "It is close by," said he, half to himself, when I had told him where the place was; "hardly a pipe and a half off, as a German would say. I shall have very great pleasure in accompanying you."

On the following morning we arrived without misadventure at the seat of the Baron von Furstheim, an old castle that had been restored in its former style, as has been done in many instances on and near the Rhine. Its appearance, and that of the park that surrounded it, almost put one in mind of the feudal times: turrets, battlements, and embrasures on the one hand; gloomy pine groves, broad meadows where cattle only were wanting, small lakes garnished with dead leaves, cobwebbed hermitages, ponds without fish, and fountains without water, on the other. Altogether it was a melancholy-looking domain. In-doors, however, things were far more cheerful, and we were received with true German hospitality. I introduced the young Parisian, who was made heartily welcome.

The baron had an only daughter, a beautiful girl named Margaret, seventeen years of age, blue-eyed and fair-haired, possessed of a countenance that indicated unmistakeably a sweet temper and a pure mind. A young officer, a cousin of her's, by name Louis von Spandau, who was staying in the house, seemed particularly susceptible of the charms of his lovely relative; and I observed that there existed a sort of tender understanding between them which was evidently approved by the parents. My Frenchman soon detected this likewise, and I thought it seemed by no means especially agreeable to him, for from his very first entrance he had shown an inclination to establish a flirtation with the young lady. This inclination, however, was chilled and blighted in the bud by the killing indifference and unconsciousness with which Margaret met the attentions and received the well-turned compliments he addressed to her.

The day passed away, somewhat dully, I must confess. An hour or two before supper-time the Parisian asked me to go and take a stroll with him in the forest. I went, and for some short time we walked side by side without speaking. At last my lively companion broke the silence.

"It is horridly *ennuyeux* in these German country houses," said he; "they are only one degree better than so many Trappist convents. That little blonde is rather pretty; but, on the whole, I do not admire fair women."

"Particularly when they show themselves indifferent to your attentions," I observed, with a smile.

"They are all so dreadfully cold and reserved," said the Parisian ; "only fit for the heroines of sentimental novels."

"Cold and reserved with men whom they are not in love with," said I, significantly.

"You must not take my remarks ill," continued my companion. "You were so kind as to bring me here, and it may appear rude on my part to say that I *ennuyer* myself."

I begged him to speak his mind freely, and assured him that it was precisely his habit of saying whatever came into his head that had made me take a liking to him. He seemed overjoyed at being unfettered in his discourse, and did not long delay making use of the permission he had received.

"I am so accustomed to the liveliness and gaiety of our drawing-rooms," said he, "that the tone of German society appears to me very insipid. The ladies are all as chilly and frozen as if they were recent importations from the steppes of Moscow. There is no *laissez-aller* about them; they always seem to be weighing their words before uttering them, and that is the death and destruction of agreeable conversation. When women talk, what they say should be unpremeditated. Ah! I shall be glad when I get back to France. Only look now, how deserted and gloomy the country around us seems. Not a living creature in sight; nobody, who could possibly avoid it, would pass along so dull and uninteresting a road."

Just as the Frenchman was thus bewailing the solitude in which we found ourselves, I perceived and pointed out to him two horsemen galloping along the highway.

"Really!" said he; "well I am surprised at it! A couple of bagmen, I suppose, who have lost their way. They are riding desperately fast, evidently in a hurry to get out of the country. Let us go nearer to the road; it does me good to see human faces."

We approached the road, and were soon able to distinguish that the horsemen were a gentleman and his servant. Both were mounted on powerful black steeds.

The traveller arrived within a few paces of us without lessening his horse's speed; then, however, he stopped so suddenly, that it appeared miraculous; the fiery animal he was riding was not thrown upon its haunches. There was something extraordinary in this sudden halt; it put me in mind of a crow flying across a field, and that, in mid-flight, lets itself fall into a furrow. The horseman turned his face towards us.

"What an extraordinary piece of goodluck!" exclaimed the Parisian; "it is he, Bertram Florival. How are you, my dear Florival, we were looking for you everywhere, yesterday evening. You have just come at the right moment. Allow me to introduce you to my friend here. You must give up your ride for to-day, and come with us to the castle. Baron Furstheim is the most amiable of hosts, and will be delighted to make your acquaintance. He does not get such a visit every day."

The horseman gave an odd smile. I naturally confirmed my companion's invitation.

"I shall be delighted to accompany you," answered Florival, with

much polish of manner, "if you think my visit will not be inconvenient or unwelcome."

"Unwelcome!" repeated the Parisian. "On the contrary, it will give the greatest pleasure. We are boring ourselves to death here, but with such an addition to our society, time will fly. We will sing, play, talk about last night's opera—by the by, Signor Florival, I congratulate you on your success. Your performance of Bertram was capital, and I flatter myself that my opinion is of some value. You must know that I have seen Levasseur in—" &c. &c.

While the Frenchman was riding his hobby and extolling Levasseur, I had time to observe the appearance of the singer. He was a man of about thirty years of age, possessed of one of those countenances which seem continually to change their expression. One moment he struck me as being extraordinarily ugly, the next I altered my opinion, and felt almost attracted by the singular but scornful smile that played round his mouth. His hair was black and glossy, his eyes of the dark and lowering grey that one sometimes notices in a thunder-cloud; his figure was flexible and graceful. A cloak hung from his shoulders, and under that, he was attired in a blue coat, adorned with buttons that seemed almost to emit sparks, so brightly polished was the metal of which they were composed. The remainder of his dress was black.

We arrived at the castle as the family were sitting down to their evening meal. The Frenchman, although he himself had only been that day introduced, presented the actor to the baron and his family, with the well-bred ease and audacity for which he was remarkable.

"We thought we were preparing an agreeable surprise for the lady baroness," said he, "by inducing this distinguished *artiste* to return with us to the castle. Signor Florival will also be able to give us a full explanation of what occurred yesterday evening at the theatre, occurrences of which you have already heard such various and exaggerated accounts."

"Explanation!" cried Florival, in a voice of which the extraordinary pitch and tone seemed to ring through the heads of the listeners, and make the baroness and her daughter turn pale. "Really I am unable to explain what there was in my acting that could cause so much astonishment. It is a part that I venture to think I play with a certain degree of truth and spirit. But ladies' nerves are so weak now-a-days; they are like the delicate strings of an instrument, and my voice, it would appear, jars them at times too strongly. That is how I account for it. It is no particular talent of mine that produced so strange an effect."

"You are modest," said the Parisian, "like all true sons of art. But allow me to ask you one question—Why did you leave the theatre immediately the curtain fell?"

"I was vexed to see the nuns so badly costumed," replied the singer. "When I call them out of their graves they must not come with crosses round their necks."

"Pardon me," said the Parisian, hastily, "they have always crosses on when Levasseur plays Bertram. You have seen Levasseur's Bertram, of course?"

The singer smiled.

"Levasseur is only my copy," said he.

The Frenchman's eyes opened to a ludicrous width, and I thought he would have fallen backwards with astonishment at this bold assertion. This time he did not tax the singer with over modesty. Before he had quite recovered from his consternation a servant announced that supper was ready, and we passed into another apartment.

The supper was laid in a large handsome room, of which the walls were covered with a dark-coloured paper and the cornices gilt. An old-fashioned chandelier was suspended from the ceiling, and four portraits of the baron's ancestors, of the size of life, decorated the walls of the apartment. Between the lofty windows stood an enormous harpsichord which looked as if it had not been opened for a quarter of a century.

Upon taking our places at the supper table I observed my friend the Parisian manœuvring a little to get by the side of Margaret, but in this he was defeated by the young lady's leaving the room a moment for some household arrangement. We seated ourselves, a chair remaining vacant for Margaret next to the officer. Florival was nearly opposite to the empty chair. I was next to the baron. In a minute or two Margaret reappeared and sat down by her cousin, while the Frenchman busied himself with the tie of his cravat by way of hiding his vexation.

We had scarcely begun our meal when I observed the singer fix his eyes upon the young lady in a marked, almost a rude manner. Margaret returned his stare by an innocent gaze of her great blue childish eyes, which did not seem to please Florival, for he immediately looked another way and seemed to be observing the portrait which hung nearly behind her. My glance followed the direction of his. Whether it was imagination or some particular effect of light, I cannot say, but it seemed to me as if the colours of the picture were changed. I had previously examined it closely, and had been struck by the healthy freshness of the complexion, the beautiful colouring of the ruddy lips and of the high white forehead. Now the blood seemed to have left the cheeks, the lips had assumed a violet hue, the brow was wrinkled and flushed as though with terror or rage. Florival continued gazing at the painting with, as it appeared to me, a strong expression of scorn upon his features.

"The picture you are observing so attentively," said the baron to him, "is a portrait of my great-grandfather."

The singer gave one of his strange smiles.

"I know it is," replied he, "I recognised him immediately."

"Nay, hardly," returned the baron, laughing; "he died in the year 1743. The country people about here gave him a strange surname, the origin of which I was never able to learn."

"What was that?" I enquired.

"Rudolph the Accursed."

"Dearest father," cried Margaret, "do not talk of that, I beseech you. You know that it is the subject of all others which I cannot bear to hear spoken of."

The baron was silent. Margaret was evidently uneasy and nervous; her eyes had lost their calm tranquil expression, and now cast hurried and feverish glances. I observed that the singer again fixed her, with something peculiarly piercing and commanding in his look. There was silence at the table; all were eating except Margaret and Florival. The young girl's head was bent forward, her bosom heaved, her eyes were fixed upon the singer. She seemed fascinated by his strange and enthralling gaze. Presently she raised a glass of water to her lips, but set it down again as though unable to taste it. Her rosy finger-nails played with a slight convulsive motion against the edge of the glass, producing a small ringing sound. I was almost alarmed at the momentarily increasing paleness of her countenance; and, with a view to break the spell that seemed to bind her, I asked her some trifling question. She appeared vexed at my so doing, and seemed to be struggling to answer, but without success. She was evidently under some mysterious influence which prevented her speaking. Her lips moved, but a deep sigh was all that escaped them. Suddenly her eyes were distended, her lips convulsed, her complexion became of a bluish-white like that of a corpse, and, uttering the words "Rudolph the Accursed!" in a shrill and thrilling tone, she fell back senseless in her chair.

All was now commotion. Everybody hurried to the young girl's assistance, except the singer, who did not lose his composure for a moment, but drank off his wine with, as I thought, a joyful look. The baroness supported her daughter's head, and bathed her temples with scented water. The young officer was the most alarmed. The Parisian whispered to me that the absurd style of reading in which the German ladies indulged was the cause of all this nervousness; that they filled their heads with ghost stories, till a word or a shadow was sufficient to throw them into hysterics. Luckily there was no danger to be apprehended from these attacks. As if to confirm his last words, Margaret just then opened her eyes, gazed enquiringly around her, and expressed her regret at having caused such a disturbance.

"It is so dreadfully warm here," she said. "If I could only have a little fresh air ——"

"Open the windows," cried the baron.

There happened to be no servant in the room at the moment, and I hurried to fulfil Margaret's wish. As I looked out of the window, it struck me that there was an unusual and unaccountable light in the park without. It was neither moonlight nor sunlight; it was too red for the former, too dim for the latter. It could only be the reflection of a fire; and, strange to say, the château in which we were seemed to be the point whence the illumination proceeded. They must have made some huge fire in the kitchen or offices, thought I. But yet the shadows fell as if the source of the light was where I stood, or in my immediate neighbourhood. The air without was still and heavy, as before a storm. From the adjacent pine-wood some night-birds were screeching forth their discordant song, and, by some unexplainable process, my imagination converted the cry into a species of tune, to which was set, in endless repetition, the words "Rudolph the Ac-

cursed!" terminating, by way of chorus, with a wild dismal laugh. Fearful lest these ill-omened sounds and appearances should reach Margaret's ear, and occasion perhaps a return of her swoon, I partly closed the window, and returned to the table.

The young girl was now entirely recovered, and all resumed their places. Scarcely had they done so, however, when a shrill neighing was heard in the court-yard of the castle.

"My horses seem to be getting up a concert of their own," said Florival, with a laugh. "They are not fond of the stable; exertion has become second nature to them. Hurrl will have trouble to keep them quiet."

"Hurrl!" cried the Parisian; "who is Hurrl?"

"My servant," replied the singer.

"That is a strange name," said the Parisian. "Pray how do you write it?"

"I never write," answered Florival, drily.

The Frenchman shook his head. He thought it very odd that a singer should not write. He knew that Levasseur often wrote.

The neighing became louder and louder. There was something unusual in the sound; one knew that it was the neighing of horses, and yet at times it sounded more like the roaring of lions. The ladies became uneasy.

"I will step down to the stable," said the Parisian. "I understand horses, and will soon quiet these. The strange horses are doubtless quarrelling with those of the baron."

He got up and pushed his chair back.

"Stop, Sir!" cried Florival, in a commanding tone. "Nobody but myself understands my horses. I will go and quiet them."

The actor's voice seemed to work like a charm upon the officious Parisian. He said nothing, but remained motionless, and as if petrified, while Florival left the room and hastened along the corridor, apparently as well acquainted with the geography of the house as if he had been born in it. The baron was much struck at this, but the Frenchman accounted for it by a strong development of the organ of locality, which he said Florival undoubtedly possessed. I proposed that we should go and see how the singer managed to quiet the horses, and my idea being approved we hurried to a gallery, the windows of which looked out upon the court. The stable-door was open and there was a light inside that came and went like that of a fire when blown up by the bellows. We could not see the stranger's horses, but two others which belonged to the baron, and stood in stalls opposite the door, were visible. Their manes were bristling upon their necks, and they crouched in the corner of their stalls as though under the influence of overpowering terror. Florival was doubtless already in the stable, for the neighing had ceased. The two black steeds had recognised and obeyed their master's voice. We waited to see him come out, but in vain, and after a few moments we returned to the supper-room. There we found him seated, chatting quietly with the baroness. On our expressing surprise at his speedy return, he explained it by a peculiar art which he possessed of instantly reducing his horses to obedience.

"I need to use neither voice nor hand," said he; "one glance from me is sufficient; the brutes know directly what I mean. When I am riding and wish my horse to stop, I have merely to close my eyes, and he halts immediately. If I wish to turn to the right, I wink with the right eye, if to the left, with the left eye. I should like to show you how I make my horse come to me by a glance. I merely look at him thus."

As he spoke, he opened his dark eyes wide, and gazed full in my face. I felt as one feels when blinded by a sudden flash of lightning breaking through the darkest night. I was compelled to look down, and when I did so, flames seemed to dance before my eyes.

The Parisian was ready with an explanation of the power possessed by Florival over his horses. He had heard that Rustan, Napoleon's Mameluke, possessed a similar faculty of governing his charger by the power of the eye, and he offered to wager that in three months' time he would learn to do the same.

"It is done," said he, "by animal magnetism. Although our Academy refuses to admit the existence of such a science, there are a vast number of persons who believe in it, and assert that a magnetiser is able to make people come to him by looking at them. It is certain that a man has much greater power of will and moral resistance than a horse, and therefore any one possessing the magnetic faculty must find more facility in exercising it upon the brute than the human animal. Florival possesses that faculty, there can be no doubt of it."

The truth of the singer's strange assertions was, however, to me by no means satisfactorily demonstrated by the Frenchman's fantastical explanation. The baron, also, evidently did not believe a word of this marvellous manner of governing horses, but he was much too polite to contradict his guest, and contented himself with expressing a wish to see Signor Florival on horseback. "If you favour us with your society for a few days," said he, "I shall probably have the opportunity."

Florival smiled.

"Who knows where I shall be in a few days?" said he. "I cannot exceed my leave, and by one o'clock this night I must depart."

"That is a thousand pities," cried the Parisian. "Are you compelled to such great punctuality? Actors are not always so conscientious. A month's leave is easily stretched to six weeks. Levasseur——"

Florival interrupted him.

"Every one has not so important an engagement as mine," said he.

"As I said before, it is a thousand pities," cried the music-loving Frenchman. "We hoped to have been favoured with a specimen of your delightful talent. You will surely sing us something before you go?"

We all joined our entreaties to those of the Parisian.

"I am not in very good voice," said Florival; "nevertheless I will try."

He threw back his head, raised his wine-glass, and sang a verse of the celebrated gambling song, in the first act of *Robert the Devil*. The window-frames rattled, and the glasses on the table jingled, as

his powerful tones echoed through the room. The Parisian now pressed him strongly to sing the trio between Bertram, Robert, and Alice, offering to take the tenor part, which he assured him he was perfectly competent to do, having more than once had the honour of singing with Levasseur at private parties. I made the remark that for a trio three persons were necessary, and that they would hardly accomplish the one in question unless they could find an Alice. The Frenchman laughed at his oversight, and turning to Margaret begged her to take the part of Alice. Margaret protested she did not sing, and the Parisian finding all hopes of assistance from her at an end proposed, after a moment's reflection, that we should send for Made-moiselle V—— who, upon the preceding evening, had performed Alice to Florival's Bertram. The baron made many objections to this, probably from a dislike to having an actress introduced into his house; but the Parisian, who seemed to guess the motives of his repugnance, undertook to prove that such a proceeding was perfectly in accordance with good taste and propriety; that in Paris the Doruses and Damoreaus and Grisis were members of the most elegant circles, and that in London their presence was sought at the most fashionable parties. The baron at last said that he would agree to whatever his guests wished, but that he thought it probable the lady might decline so sudden an invitation at so late an hour.

"Decline it?" cried Florival, laughing; "she will come directly if I send for her." Then looking at his watch, he said, "It is half-past eleven: no time could be better. Hurrl shall fetch her."

The singer seemed really to wish to give us a specimen of his talent, and to regret no trouble that might enable him to accomplish the projected trio. He got up, and left the room to give his orders to Hurrl. He was scarcely an instant absent; and the very next minute a horse's hoofs were heard clattering out of the court. We were all struck with astonishment, and could not understand how it was possible for him to find his servant so quickly, to say nothing of the time requisite for saddling the horse. Nobody questioned him, however, and he quietly resumed his seat. "They will be here by twelve o'clock," said he.

"Capital!" exclaimed the Parisian; "we shall have a delightful little impromptu concert. But who will accompany us?"

"Hurrl," replied Florival.

"Your servant!" cried the Parisian. "Is the man musical?"

"Exceedingly so," replied the singer; "it is he who taught Paganini."

"Maestro Hurrl," repeated the Frenchman musingly. "I never heard of such a name, and certainly Paganini never mentioned his having had such an instructor."

"That is very possible," returned the singer. "Hurrl first made acquaintance with him when he sat cursing and blaspheming in an Italian dungeon. It is natural enough that in more prosperous days Paganini should be unwilling to recur to so unpleasant a period of his life.

The Parisian took all this as a joke; shook his head laughingly, but made no answer. The Baron now expressed his regret that the old

harpsichord was in such a bad state. It was an heir-loom, and had not been played upon for years.

"I will try it," said the singer, "and, if necessary, tune it a little."

The instrument was opened. Florival's long fingers flew like lightning over the keys. Margaret was regretting they had no tuning hammer, but Florival said it was unnecessary; detected the false notes with extreme fineness of ear; and, without any assistance but his hands, twisted the pegs and put the instrument in tune. We were exceedingly surprised at such extraordinary strength of finger. Presently he got up from the harpsichord.

"There," said he, "all is ready. Mademoiselle V.— will be here directly."

I walked to the window to watch for the actress's arrival. The same strange fallow light that I had before noticed was still spread over the landscape, and by it I saw with unutterable astonishment Hurrl mounted upon his coal-black steed, galloping towards the castle, with a female figure seated behind him, her arms clasped tightly round his waist. This manner of conveying a lady to an evening party was certainly unprecedented, and I took care not to say a word of what I saw to the Baron or his family. I left the window, and waited the appearance of the actress, who presently entered, attended by Hurrl. She was a young and pretty woman, whose coquettish costume and graceful salutation contrasted strangely with the hollowness of her eyes and pallor of her cheeks. She was evidently either very ill or dreadfully fatigued: her movements were more like those of an automaton worked by some admirable machinery than of a human being.

Hurrl took his place at the piano. The Parisian gallantly offered his hand to the lady to lead her to the instrument, and expressed his fear that she had suffered from cold in coming through the night air. Her fingers, he said, were like ice. Florival stepped forward, and made a sign to begin.

They sang. Surely those tones issued from no human throats! Even the Parisian seemed temporarily endowed with a voice at which he himself was startled. It was a trio between Hell, Earth, and Heaven;—Earth with its doubts and anxieties, its struggles for truth and consolation; Heaven, with its love, its angelic hymns, and its joy without end; Hell, with its hate and despair, its fiendish triumph and wild satanic exultation. The harpsichord did not accompany, it only seemed to do so: the same invisible orchestra which had struck terror upon the preceding evening united itself with the voices. The sounds were sublime and in perfect unison, but yet terrific; one wondered and admired; but, at the same time, one's pulses almost stopped from terror. The music made the walls of the castle shake again.

With a greedy attention did the listeners drink in every note of this strange performance. When within a few bars of the end of the trio, we felt ourselves seized with a singular kind of drowsiness, which I can only compare to that occasioned by opium. The inclination to sleep was irresistible. The old clock which stood upon a pedestal at the end of the room struck one, and roused us from the sort of dreamy slumber into which we had fallen. On opening my

eyes, which appeared to me to have been closed but for a second, I saw the Parisian lying upon an ottoman, completely exhausted by his un wonted exertions. Florival, the actress, and Hurri had disappeared.

I asked the Frenchman if he had accompanied the strangers to the door ; but he said that he had scarcely finished his part in the trio, when he felt himself so fatigued that he was compelled to lie down for a minute or two. He closed his eyes but an instant, and on re-opening them the guests were no longer there. They must have left the room during his momentary state of oblivion. The Baron declared the whole affair to be most extraordinary, and unlike anything he had ever seen or heard of ; everybody else was of the same opinion. All thought it rather uncourteous of Florival to have thus departed without taking leave.

"You must not be surprised or vexed at that," said the Parisian ; "most singers and artists have their eccentricities. Levasseur himself is not entirely without them. Ah ! you should hear Levasseur in that trio !"

"Signor Florival told us," said the Baroness, "that he must leave us without fail at one o'clock. Doubtless the time arrived before he was aware of it, and he had no leisure for leave-takings."

"I should very much like to know," said the young officer, "if this singer's true name is Florival, or who he really is."

Scarcely had the words been spoken, when from the open and deserted harpsichord there proceeded a sound like the very faintest tones of an Eolian harp, and the melody out of the last act of Robert the Devil, of which the words are "He was a devil ! he was a devil !" vibrated like fairy music through the apartment. The ladies and myself distinctly recognised the air ; the others had not done so, but attributed the vibration of the strings to a current of wind from the open casements passing through the instrument. I did not insist on what I had heard, for I knew that if I did the Frenchman would have laughed and lectured for an hour on the superstitious fancies of the Germans.

It was now very late. I took my leave of the Baron and his family, and in company with the Parisian returned to G—. There I found letters that had arrived during my absence, and which compelled me to start for Vienna at an early hour on the following day.

About a year after this remarkable evening I met Margaret and her cousin, then become her husband, at the baths of Carlsbad, and we began talking about the singular circumstances attending my visit to the Schloss-Furstheim. Margaret told me that they had since heard that the same actress who so readily took the part of Alice, upon our invitation, died suddenly at twelve o'clock upon the very night she sang before us. I remembered her strange ride upon Hurri's black horse, and Burger's Leonora recurred to my memory. "Could it really have been a supernatural appearance?" said I, half-ashamed of starting the hypothesis.

Margaret looked grave, but her husband laughed and maintained that the whole affair was a sort of fantastical joke ; that we must remember we had had to do with actors, who no doubt thought the opportunity favourable for amusing themselves at our expense, and

giving additional effect to the wild music which they had sung for our entertainment.

"My little wife is terribly superstitious," added he, laughing; "she left us no peace till the portrait of Rudolph the Accursed was put out of sight in an unoccupied room of the castle. She could not bear to look at it."

"The whole of that evening is like a dream to me," said his wife, "and I have begged Louis never to talk of it to any one. Nobody would believe but that he greatly exaggerated, or perhaps entirely invented, the strange circumstances that nevertheless really happened."

The stranger paused. His tale was at an end.

"A singular history, indeed," said I. "And do *you* mean to confirm the lady's words, and say that those circumstances really occurred?"

"Certainly," was the reply; "they really occurred."

"Exactly as you have related them?"

"Exactly as I have related them," said the stranger, with a smile and a bow, taking up his pipe, which had gone out during the latter part of his story, and walking towards the house, to re-light it as I supposed. I sat with my head leaning on my hand, musing on the extraordinary tale I had just heard, and awaiting his return to question him concerning it. Ten minutes elapsing without his re-appearance, I became impatient, and followed him into the house. "Where is the gentleman gone to?" said I to the hostess, whom I met in the passage.

"What gentleman?" asked the woman, with a stare.

"The gentleman who was sitting with me in the arbour," replied I, impatient at her stupidity.

"I have seen no gentleman," said she. "What was he like?"

"Pshaw! A stout gentleman, rather bald, who smokes a pipe with a head of Schiller painted on it."

The woman stared again, as if she had never heard of Schiller or the stout gentleman. Then suddenly bursting into a laugh—

"*Der gnadige Herr hat wahrscheinlich geschlafen,*" said she. "You have, perhaps, been sleeping, sir. The day is very warm," she added, with a comical look.

I pushed past her, angry at her trifling or stupidity, whichever it was. On reaching the door of the inn I cast a hasty glance up and down the road, and towards the river which flowed half a mile off, at the foot of some sloping meadows. Not a creature was to be seen, but I thought I perceived a puff of smoke rising from behind a hedge some distance off. "It is his pipe!" cried I, and hurried towards the spot, hatless as I was, and in momentary expectation of a *coup-de-soleil*. Neither pipe nor stranger was there, but a heap of weeds to which the peasants had set fire, and from which the smoke had proceeded. All my endeavours to find the stranger were in vain; the obstinate hostess persisted in knowing nothing about such a person, and from that day to this I have never seen him. My readers must, therefore, judge for themselves whether the story of the Unknown Singer be a true tale, or a Mystification.

THE BOY AND THE ANGEL.

BY ROBERT BROWNING.

MORNING, noon, eve, and night,
"Praise God," sang Theocrite ;

Then to his poor trade he turn'd,
By which the daily meal was earn'd.

Hard he labour'd, long and well,
O'er the work his boy's curls fell ;

But ever, at each period,
He stopp'd and sang, "Praise God ;"

Then back again his curls he threw,
And cheerful turn'd to work anew.

Said Blaise, the listening monk, "Well done ;
"I doubt not thou art heard, my son ;

"As if thy voice to-day
"Were praising God the Pope's great way ;

"This Easter Day, the Pope at Rome
"Praises God from Peter's dome."

Said Theocrite, "Would God that I
"Might praise Him, that great way, and die !"

Night pass'd, day shone,
And Theocrite was gone.

With God a day endures away,
A thousand years are as a day :

In Heaven God said, "Nor day nor night
"Brings one voice of my delight."

Then Gabriel, like a rainbow's birth,
Spread his wings and sank to earth,

Enter'd the empty cell,
And play'd the craftsman well,

And morn, noon, eve, and night,
Prais'd God in place of Theocrite.

And from a boy to youth he grew ;
The man put off the stripling's hue ;

The man matured, and fell away
Into the season of decay ;

Yet ever o'er the trade he bent,
And ever lived content.

God said, "A praise is in mine ear ;
"There is no-doubt in it, no fear :

"So sing old worlds, and so
"New worlds that from my footstool go ;

"Clearer loves sound other ways ;
"I miss my little human praise."

Then forth sprang Gabriel's wings, off fell
The flesh, remain'd the cell.

'Twas Easter Day : he flew to Rome,
And paused above the dome.

In the tiring-room, close by
The great outer gallery,

With his holy vestments dight,
Stood the new pope, Theocrite,

And all his past career
Came back upon him clear—

How rising from the sickness drear
He grew a priest and now stood here.

To the east with praise he turn'd,
And in the Angel burn'd :—

“ Vainly I left my sphere,
“ Vainly hast thou lived many a year;

“ Go back, and praise again
“ The early way, while I remain ;

“ Be again the boy all curl'd ;
“ I will finish with the world.”

Theocrite grew old at home,
Gabriel dwelt in Peter's dome :

One vanish'd as the other died ;
They sought God side by side.

THE SLOW MAN.

BY G. P. R. JAMES.

ON a spring morning of the year 1818—it would not have much mattered if I had said 19 or 20, for the occurrence took place every day till a certain imp, called steam, took it into his head to run away with stage coaches; but dates are excellent things, and give a certain degree of truth and identity to a tale.—On a spring morning, then, of the year 1818—about the 17th of April it was, or perhaps the 19th or 20th, I do not exactly know which, and will not be particular to a day—a coach painted red was standing before the door of an inn in Holborn. Upon the sides of the coach were inscribed names enough to have furnished half a road-book, and several respectable men in fustian and other jackets were busily engaged in putting boxes, baskets, and trunks upon the top and in the boot. It is an extraordinary thing that coaches should always wear boots. However, the boots were filled, and the top was nearly covered with luggage, a small space only being left at the edge for the sitting part of some gentlemen, who began to ascend thither by a ladder. What is called the box-seat—though those at the back better deserved the name from being actually amongst the boxes—the box-seat was occupied by a very gay-looking man with inconceivable mustachoes, a fashionably cut coat, and spurs on his heels, who held the reins, while the coachman took a last look at his bill, and considered where the other passenger could be.

“Well, I can’t wait beyond the time!” he cried, putting one foot up to mount his seat of rule, but just then a voice was heard from the entrails of the inn, which proved to be that of a chamber-maid screaming in alt, “Stop, stop, stop! The gentleman’s a-coming down!” and the moment after a figure appeared at the door, with the head turned round to the porters behind him, saying, with a sort of staccato movement, “Put the big trunk on the top, but take care it does not get wet.—Have you got the little box?—Where’s the dressing-case?—The umbrella can go inside.—Give me that coat—and the cloaks too.—There, don’t drop the stick.”

The coachman looked up to the gay man on the box-seat with a cunning screw of his left eye, saying, “Here’s a slow coach!” and the gentleman gazed with a look of sovereign contempt upon the *slow man*, as he now turned round for the first time, displaying a front view of his person. It was by no means a disagreeable prospect, for the face was a pleasant one, being that of a man apparently five or six and twenty years of age, with a good-humoured look, which for a

single instant had a somewhat merry expression, as if he thought having been nearly too late for the coach, good fun. He had a profusion of black hair — an immense profusion, beautifully curled and oiled, floating round his face, but neither whiskers nor mustachoes. His features were good, his teeth very fine, and his eyes deep blue. He was a tall powerful fellow too, and by no means one whose appearance would have led one to believe that he was slow at any thing. Yet, nevertheless, there he stood, busying himself with half-a-dozen little matters by the coach-side, till the Jehu losing all patience exclaimed, "Come sir, jump up. — Lord bless me, there's a place. Don't you see. Right behind me. If you don't get up I must go; can't be a waiting about here all day."

At length the slow man was fairly seated on the top, just behind the coachman and his mustachoeed co-partner of the box; and, as if to revenge himself, as well as to make up for lost time, the driver flanked his leaders and touched up his wheelers till they flew through the streets like four mad creatures. The apple women trembled, the sellers of saloop and early purl quaked — a whole protruding pile of spring cabbages were swept remorseless from the top of an overloaded market cart; and the first thing that interrupted the furious career of the stage coach was a flock of sheep. Now, the coachman would have gone right over dogs and cats and human beings without remorse or pity; but there is a penalty for running over sheep, which makes the whole family of Jehu very considerate towards the wool-bearers. Gathering up his horses then, he brought the coach to a full stop, and the mustachoes were turned round to see how the *slow man* bore the whole transaction. But he seemed too slow, even to have remarked that he was going quick; and there he was, quietly paring his nails, which were very neat and well formed, with a pen-knife, much to the horror and consternation of a nervous little tobacconist, who was seated beside him, and who expected every instant to find the coach go over and the knife sticking in his stomach.

"I wish, sir, you'd ha' the kindness to put up that knife," said the tobacconist, "I'm afeard of it. It might poke one's eye out."

"Certainly," replied the slow man, but whether this assent was given to the petition or the proposition did not exactly appear; for he pared out the nail he was about, which was the only one still requiring the operation, and then put the knife in his pocket.

These short speeches, however, began a conversation in which the mustachoeed man took part, and the slow man, though he did not show himself very rapid in delivering his sentiments, talked well enough upon all he did talk, and that in a pleasant sweet-toned voice, which struck the ear of the gentleman on the box, as bearing a resemblance to tones he had heard before. "Pray sir," he said, with his usual quick decided manner, "had you ever any relation in the — dragoons?"

"Let me see," said the slow man, "yes, I think it was the — dragoons that Charles Harcourt was in before he exchanged into — lancers, who are in India."

"Exactly, exactly," answered he of the mustachoes, "we were in the same troop. What relation is he, may I ask?"

"Let me see," said the slow man again, "why, really I do not exactly know what sort of relation to call it; but we are connected I know."

"You're a good deal like him, only he is fair and you are dark."

"Yes," said the slow man, and the conversation dropped.

All along the road, the slow man showed his peculiar characteristic, much to the annoyance of the coachman and the amusement of the passengers, especially of him with mustachoes. At every place where they stopped to change horses, he got down for the purpose of unbending his knees, and at every place he was the last to get up. At Ware, he was drinking a cup of coffee when the coachman was on the box; at Wade's-mill, he had to shout like the chamber-maid "stop! stop!" and the coachman would not have stopped if he had had his fare; at Royston, he was not to be found for three minutes, and it was discovered that he had walked slowly on.

"Come, sir, 'pon my soul you must not keep us so," said the coachman, "make haste up."

"I never do any thing in a hurry," answered the slow man.

"One can see that," said he of the mustachoes; "why, your cousin Charles used to be all life and bustle."

"He was wrong," said the slow man; and the conversation dropped again. At length, however, the coach stopped at the Swan at Harlston, before the door of which was standing an old yellow chariot, with the innkeeper's name upon it, and a pair of posters in the harness. The gentleman in mustachoes jumped down off the box, and pointed to his portmanteau. All his evolutions were rapid: he paid the coachman, feed the guard, called the hostler, ordered a chaise out, told every body to be quick; and then knocked a well-polished boot with a neat cane. The slow man got down from the top, had his goods and chattels taken down, which, as he knew where they all were, was sooner done than might have been expected, and when all was complete walked slowly up to the side of the vehicle that stood ready, and put his foot upon the step, just as the hostler touched his hat to the other gentleman, saying "Wery sorry, sir, we ha'ant another pair in just now, and them was bespoken."

The mustachoes swore a loud oath, and then demanded where the other chaise was going.

"Going to Stapleford, sir," said the hostler.

"Well, I am going nearly to Stapleford too," rejoined the other; and deciding upon his move at once, he advanced to the side of the slow man's vehicle, into which he was by this time deposited, and explained his disappointment, adding, "You are likely to get to the end of the journey first, after all, unless you give me a place beside you."

"Slow and sure," said the other, with a quiet smile.

"I am not going all the way to Stapleford," rejoined the mustachoes to mitigate the infliction.

"You are perfectly welcome, sir," rejoined his slow acquaintance; "only pray do not agitate the post-boy by too great speed."

The other jumped in without more ado, his portmanteau was disposed of as best could be arranged, the door was shut, the innkeeper

"Oh, he is the slowest man I ever saw in my life!" exclaimed Captain Denver; and he proceeded to give a very amusing and high-coloured account of Mr. Harcourt's adventures and misadventures on the way.

The story must have been well told; for Julia first smiled, and then laughed, which she had not shown a symptom of doing since their arrival; and in the midst of the merriment the object of it appeared, apologising, in a quiet, gentlemanly tone for his tardiness. His eye glanced to Julia's countenance too; and, apparently divining what they had been talking of, he smiled likewise. At dinner, he sat next to her on one side, and Captain Denver on the other, for it was a comfortable round table; and while the last-named gentleman was saying something of no great consequence to Lady Shaw, Mr. Harcourt and Julia exchanged a few words, and both smiled. Sir John was glad to see his niece more cheerful, for he entertained a truly paternal desire of marrying her to Captain Denver, for no other reason on earth than one of those many which usually influence parents and guardians in choosing husbands for their daughters and wards. Reasons did I call them? Heaven forgive me! for, though the iniquity does not always run so far as to couple youth and age, beauty and deformity, virtue and vice, yet a great number of very *unreasonable* sins are every day committed in this sort between Temple Bar and Kensington Gardens; and many a woman, in the short walk from St. George's to Doctors' Commons, is conducted by the hand of a parent or guardian. It may be asked, what was Sir John's reason for desiring this marriage? But whoever asks must be answered very nearly in poor Canning's words: "Reason, God bless you! I have none to tell, sir!" It was a caprice he had acquired — pray mark the word; for he had not invented, discovered, or created it. The honour of introducing it into the family was Lady Shaw's; but, as neither he nor she had any other children, he adopted it at once, and humoured it prodigiously.

After dinner, however, when the ladies had left the table, and the clergyman was a little dozey, Sir John thought it expedient to give Mr. Harcourt a hint not to speak more than necessary of Charles Harcourt.

"The fact is," he said, "Julia and Charles, in their youth, chose to get up a little romance together."

"Indeed!" said Mr. William Harcourt in his quiet way: "did they ever publish it?"

"Pooh!" cried Captain Denver: "my dear sir, Sir John means they fancied themselves in love."

"Ah! now I understand," said Mr. Harcourt; "but I always like to have things clear. I am an unimaginative man, my good sir — rather slow in matters of fancy. But, now I understand, I won't talk of sentiment, or anything of that sort. It only nourishes folly. The rupees, Sir John — the rupees: those are the things to look to. Ha! Captain; the rupees: a lac is no bad thing, but a crore is better."

Captain Denver did not altogether like the allusion in the way it was put; but Mr. Harcourt soon began to pass the wine

without filling his glass ; and the gentlemen returned to the drawing-room.

Julia Grey was much gayer : she had recovered her spirits completely. She played on a very fine piano that stood in the corner, and she sang very sweetly some very sweet songs. Perhaps she might — if it had been then written, which it was not — have sung, “ Oh, no ! we never mention her ; ” but, to all appearance, whatever she might have sung, would have been very much the same to Mr. Harcourt, who sat upon a sofa by Lady Shaw, and told her an interminable story about India, in a very slow strain : how he got into a palanquin and how he got out again, and how he got upon an elephant, and how he got off again ; and how he beat a jungle and how he was beat back again, with three royal tigers at his heels ; and a great many other offs and ons, with which Lady Shaw, who knew a good deal about India, having married her husband there, was very much entertained. It is true, while Mr. Harcourt went on with his story, he often took a look at Julia as she sat at the piano, with Captain Denver exclaiming “ exquisite ! ” behind her ; and doubtless he thought her a very pretty girl ; for he had eyes as well as other men.

However as all things come to an end, so did the evening and Mr. Harcourt's story ; and the whole party retired to rest. Early the next morning Captain Denver, who was the most active man in the world, and equally fond of the sports of the field and of the brook, went out with rod and line to seduce some speckled trouts out of the water. Mr. Harcourt, on the contrary, remained in bed, or at least in his room ; for the servant found him up and the window open when he went in at half past seven. At eight he went down to the breakfast room ; and at half past eight he and Julia were sauntering slowly along about a hundred and fifty yards from the house, just before the windows of Sir John and Lady Shaw. Sir John perceived them as they went up and down, while he was dressing at nine ; and doubting Mr. Harcourt's prudence in regard to his and her cousin, Charles, he fell into a state of great anxiety. He knew not how long they had been together ; but he feared much mischief might have been done, and hurrying his toilet, he went out less neat than ordinary to stop any further rousing of reminiscences. To his great satisfaction, however, he found Julia very gay, and during the day, though she showed no disposition to flirt with Captain Denver, and rather gave a greater share of her attention to Mr. Harcourt, as if she felt quite sure that he would not fall in love with her ; yet she was very civil to her military admirer, and treated him with perfect lady-like courtesies.

Mr. Harcourt indeed maintained his character, for though he had been down so early, he made up for the fault by being late at luncheon, late at dinner, by keeping Lady Shaw waiting for him half an hour when she had ordered the carriage on purpose to take him to see something wonderful ; and by sundry other feats of slowness that put the family to great inconvenience. The last thing he was late about was announcing his own departure, which he might certainly have done earlier than eleven o'clock on the night preceding. It did not take Sir John by surprise, for Captain Denver had kindly heralded

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it to his worthy host before. But Lady Shaw was astonished, and hoped that her cousin would change his resolution and stay a little longer.

"Impossible! I am afraid, my dear Lady," replied Mr. Harcourt, wishing her good night with a tender shake of the hand. "I walked over to Sawstone to order my chaise before dinner, which must plead my excuse for keeping you to-day. I will bid you farewell for the present, as you will not be down when I go. I ordered the chaise at five, but I dare say I shall not start till six, for I never like to be hurried, and it does those fellows good to make them wait a little."

Then turning to Julia he bade her good night too, adding with a gay look to Captain Denver, "I hope, my fair cousin, when you and I meet again it will be under different circumstances."

"Whew!" cried Sir John; and Julia, alternately blushing and turning pale, disengaged her hand and ran up stairs.

"My dear William," said Sir John, in a reproachful tone.

"Nay, Mr. Harcourt!" cried Captain Denver. But their companion only laughed, asking, "What, am I too quick for once in my life? Well, Captain, if I have spoiled your stay, there is a place in my chaise quite at your service to-morrow morning; but mind, though I have said five, I am not very punctual."

"No, no, I thank you," answered Denver, in answer to his good-humoured laughing speech; "I must stay to mend what you have marred;" and thus they parted for the night.

Sir John Shaw was rather late down to breakfast the next day. Captain Denver had gone out to throw a fly. Lady Shaw breakfasted in her own room. There was no tea made for Sir John; and nobody to make tea. He rang the bell once; one-eighth of a minute after, he rang it again; and then a third time.

"Where's my niece? See for Miss Grey," he said as soon as a servant appeared.

"She has not come down yet, Sir John," answered the man.

"Why, ten o'clock, and not down yet!" cried the master of the mansion. "I never heard of such a thing. Bid her maid call her."

The man retired; but he could not find Miss Grey's maid; and, after enquiring for her for ten minutes, he sent up the upper housemaid. Sir John, however, was an impatient man, and she found him coming away from his niece's room in a very bad humour.

"She is not there," he said; "she's been down a long while, I am sure. Send out into the grounds to seek her, and bid her come and make breakfast."

It was very evident to the housemaid that Miss Julia would be scolded, and so she went out to seek her herself, passing Captain Denver with a basket of trout.

The next person she saw was the head gardener, of whom she asked—"Where is Miss Julia, Jones?"

"I don't know," replied the man: "I ha'nt seen her this morning."

He never raised his head from some flowers he was planting out, and she went on till she found an old man trimming the walks.

"Have you seen Miss Grey, old Dennis?" said the housemaid.

"Yes, Miss," answered Dennis, stopping for a minute; "but it's a long time agone."

"Which way did she take?" demanded the maiden.

"Why, they seemed a-going towards Harlston," replied the labourer, "but I won't say for sartain."

Jane uttered a shriek that made the old man start; but the next instant she caught hold of him, saying—"You must come to Sir John this minute."

The whole truth had flashed upon her mind at once; and very nearly half of it flashed upon the minds of Sir John Shaw and Captain Denver, when the tale was told them as they sat at breakfast.

"Going to Harlston in a chaise!" cried Sir John.

"And four," added Captain Denver.

"With a gentleman!" exclaimed Sir John.

"He had very black hair, had he not?" demanded the Dragoon.

"Yes, sir, a chaise and four," replied the labourer, "going tow'rd Harlston, it seemed to me: but ca'nt exactly say—with a gentleman, to be sure; and Mrs. Martyr, as was her maid; but as to black hair—no. His hair was lighter than yourn, sir; for he put his head out o' winder, and said, 'It can't be a quarter past five yet.'"

Captain Denver looked at Sir John Shaw, and Sir John Shaw looked at Captain Denver; and then Sir John ordered the horses to be put to the carriage, and vowed a great many things, although the Dragoon, who was cooler, assured him that there was no use of doing any thing, for that the fugitives had got a five hours' start, that there was but one pair of posters at Harlston, and that they were gone.

While he was trying in vain to impress this reasonable view of the case upon his companion, a servant entered with a note addressed to the gallant officer himself.

"My dear Denver," it ran, "I forgive you for not knowing an old comrade after three years' absence in India. Time and climate make great changes, as well as a black wig; but I can hardly forgive you for making me shave off my mustachoes, as they take a long time to grow, you know. I have no forgiveness to ask of you in return; for I have only taken what is my own, a heart that has long been mine, and a hand that has long been promised. I cannot write what Julia desires to add to Sir John and Lady Shaw; for, as I hold that she was perfectly justified, in order to escape constant persecution, to call her affianced husband to her rescue as soon as she found he had returned to England, I think no apology necessary on her part or mine. I only write this to save any unnecessary alarm; for, before you receive it, we shall be beyond pursuit. Nevertheless, I still think as I told you yesterday, that Charles Harcourt was wrong in former days, when he was so full of life and bustle as you mentioned yesterday; for the experience of the present shows me, that it is better to 'be slow and sure, than quick and miss the mark.'

"Yours,

"CHARLES HARCOURT."

"They shall not have one sixpence to buy them tea and sugar, till she is of age," cried Sir John Shaw, when he read the letter which Captain Denver had received.

"When will that be," asked his companion, like the bells of Stepnee.

"In six months," replied Sir John, "but they may starve before that."

"Oh, you forget the Deccan prize money," replied the Captain, "and Major Harcourt has a large share. Well, after all, though this is a great bore ; yet it is a capital hoax, too.—That ever I should take Charles Harcourt for a slow man ! I wonder why he took that character."

That was a fact which Captain Denver never discovered ; but it so happened, that while this very conversation was going on, and Charles Harcourt and the fair Julia were carried forward towards the celebrated green, that gentleman was explaining the mystery in answer to a question from her.

"The fact is, dear girl," he said, "your first letter telling me of this persecution reached me at Como, where I was stopping for one day in my way back, with my cousin William ; we arranged together the scheme for my taking his name ; and the same post that brought me your second letter in London bore one also from Sir John, inviting me down to Herne House to meet Captain Denver, who was to marry his niece Julia. Through my servant, who knew his, I gained information of all Denver's movements. I lodged at the inn whence the coach started, fearing that he might have got information of my return ; and I did not show myself till the last moment, to make sure that he did not get down before. There was a little fun and a little malice in playing the character of the slow man, when once I found it had been given me by the people on the coach ; but there was reason, too. I was not quite sure that Denver had not discovered me under my disguise ; and I thought it not impossible that he might quit the coach, and come on by forced marches to enlighten Sir John, and shut the doors of the house against me ; nor was it till we were nearly at Harlston that I felt quite secure he had no suspicion. Though you were informed of my coming under a false name, I could see how surprised you were to see me enter with my rival ; but that very fact guarded against the least doubt on the part of Sir John and Lady Shaw, who knew that Denver and I were formerly well acquainted."

"But do you really think, Charles, that there is no danger of their overtaking us ?" asked Julia.

"None, none, dearest," replied her lover, "the slow man has been a great deal too quick for them ;" and so it proved.

SEA-SIDE LORE.

GATHERED BY THE MOUNTAINEER.

SEAMAN'S TROTH.

In the last ninety years of the foregoing century, one bright spring morning, two Blankenese * vessels weighed anchor to sail northwards in the way of traffic. Both captains were young, vigorous men, and, like all true Blankenese, able mariners. It was not for the first time that their small light-timbered craft were about to furrow the unruly waters, although, it must be owned, the mariners had never before carried out such sanguine expectations to sea. Both had not long before betrothed themselves, and on the favour or disfavour of the sea hung the weal or the woe of their immediate future—their further, life. The parting was accordingly heavier than usual, for the young brides of the courageous sailors did little to ease the separation and its bitterness. Dörte, the affianced of the fair haired Ludolf, was especially violent in her grief, and would not be pacified. She hung upon the neck of the poor skipper until at length he was forced to use a lover's gentle violence and drag himself away.

"Alas! Marie," said Dörte, to her sisterly companion, wiping the tears from her eyes with her apron, whilst her bedimmed glances followed the vessels, vanishing in the morning mist,—“Alas! Marie, what is to become of us if Ludolf and Nicholas return not again—if they should fall into the hands of the English?”

"How canst thou torment thyself, Dörte?" replied the more resolute Marie. "The English are no pirates. They let every one range the sea as he lists, provided he come not into too close neighbourhood with them. Besides our brave fellows will be far out of their reach. Norway does not lie near England."

"That is very true!" said Dörte, "but my heart is disquieted, and I know Ludolf so well. He is confident in his strength, and never displeased to get into strife."

"And if so, is he not a brave Blankenese skipper, that can handle his knife, as none other can, and hit his mark with it at fifty paces off? I would give something, if he could teach my Nicholas his cunning."

"Well! yes," said Dörte, with a voice that her tears choked. "That is all very true; but Nicholas is much more prudent. He looks about him before he begins a quarrel."

* BLANKENESE, a village of Denmark, on the Elbe, about nine miles from Hamburg.

"So much the better," answered Marie; "then can they help one another in distress and danger.—Look how prettily the red streamers fly in the thin mist. For all the world like pointed flames, springing out of the stream to show the sea-farers their way. Look Dörte—you can still see the sails of our beloved. How beautifully the first beam of the rising sun reddens them!"

Dörte followed the direction of her comrade's eyes till the last trace of the sea-adventurers disappeared. Arm in arm, the two maidens quitted the river bank, and returned to their romantically situated home, which, in the green vesture of spring foliage, looked more home-like and lovelier than ever.

Meanwhile the two sea-mates made with a fair wind to the mouth of the Elbe. Their shallops flew with arrowy speed over the still widening waters, that soon announced the proximity of the sea; and they passed many a large merchantman laden with numerous sails, to the no small mortification of captains and crews.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Ludolf aloud. "How the old rum barrels of old England swell out, when a glib Blankenese ship passes them! Quick Nicholas. Starboard your helm! Let us sail right through them, and vex those proud hearts of theirs!"

Nicholas had no objection. The young seamen braced their sails closer to the wind, and slid with the ease of winged mews, close upon the bows of two English brigs. They passed them like a shot.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" screamed Ludolf, overjoyed at his victory. "Blankenese for ever against Old England!"

Nicholas chimed in, and both waved their hats triumphantly, as long as they kept the slowly sailing English vessels behind them in sight.

"That was Wild Jack!" said Ludolf, as they approached Cuxhaven. "The fellow is an incarnate devil when he has power in his hands. A month ago I gave it to the shark. I fell in with him at the *Baumhaus* in Hamburg. He had stationed himself in the parlour of the house before a chart of the Elbe, and was holding a lecture upon the channel of the river before some fine YES-saying gentleman or other: and, I tell thee Nicholas, not a whit better than a village schoolmaster examining for a pilot. Well! I station myself behind him, and to every observation he makes, I growl a malicious *Hum!* till my master Jack, as red as a boiled lobster, turns round, and in good seaman's Dutch orders me out. This was contrary to my principles, as you know; so, says I, in answer, 'Sir, I have nothing to say against that, provided you'll play a little game with me. Hand up, and back to the wall! If at thirty paces, I nail the upper joint of your little finger, with my knife, to the wall, you, Sir, shall walk out first. If I miss, I will anchor out of your course.' The fellow stared at me, like a turbot, turned his back contemptuously upon me, and left the *Baumhaus* followed by the laughter of all the Hamburg captains and brokers who had witnessed the whole thing. Since that time Wild Jack crawls about me like a sea-spider! Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Nicholas enjoyed with Ludolf, the gamesome victory, which little Blankenese had won over mighty England, and told a similar incident

upon his part. In the midst of their gay talk, they reached the red buoy. The more violent rocking of the sea interrupted the conversation, as it also quickly separated the light vessels from one another. They held, as much as possible, one course; sailed on along the coast of Holstein, and disappeared behind the distant islands, which, in wonderful groups, surround the flat coasts of Denmark.

Four months afterwards, when the autumnal storms were already beginning to give notice of themselves, a solitary vessel ran into the haven of Blankenese. It was evening. Nicholas had returned from his Norwegian voyage. The whole village was soon aware of his arrival, and young and old greeted the skipper with seaman's heartiness and warmth. Marie was amongst the crowd, and how much rejoiced at the happy return of her beloved, need not be said.

"And where is thy friend Ludolf?" asked the maiden, after their first salutation. How will poor Dörte bloom up again, when she once more sees her wild, loved Ludolf!"

"Where is Dörte?" asked Nicholas.

"At Altona, with her sister. I expect her every instant."

"I had rather she did not come; not to-day, at least," said Nicholas.

"Why, what has happened?"

Nicholas shook his head.

"Where does he tarry?" asked the maiden anew.

"That's the very thing!" rejoined her lover, with a heavy sigh.

"You will not see the poor fellow to-day; and I much question whether you'll ever see him again!"

"Heavens! Nicholas—is he drowned?"

"I can't tell—I hope not."

"Oh, speak out, I pray!" said Marie, urging him. "If any misfortune has befallen Ludolf, I am the only one to take the miserable news to that poor creature!"

"The story is a strange one, and, indeed, not very clear to myself," rejoined Nicholas. "You know how long ago it is since we put to sea. It is just four months. We were in capital spirits; Ludolf especially, who went on telling me his droll stories, just as if I had been a simple all-believing girl. With a favourable wind, we held on our way, left Denmark behind us, saw the shores of Norway, and settled our business at Bergen. But Ludolf had always a hundred other things to do: now a wager; now a fight. However, every thing went right at last, and we struck out again to sea—sound and fresh as ever. For two days the wind was not favourable, but steady. Half sailing half lavingering we got slowly on. With evening of the third day we had made the entrance of the *Hardanger-Fiord*, and here, unexpectedly, a violent storm overtook us, and drove us far asunder. Next morning found us still in sight, although it was impossible to get together again. Left to the mercy of the storm, we soon lost our course, and were driven far to the north, always keeping at about half a mile's distance from each other. Upon the sixth day we saw several large ships a great way off, struggling, like ourselves, against the weather. They were English merchantmen. As

they came nearer to us, we got farther and farther away ; so that at last I could just spy Ludolf's skiff, dancing like a seagull on the billows. All on a sudden, the diminishing point got amongst the British ships, and then, what with the storm that came on heavier than ever, and the approach of night, I could see nothing more. The next morning Ludolf, English ships and all, had disappeared !”

“ All lost ! Oh, poor Ludolf ! wretched Dörte !”

Nicholas shrugged his shoulders. “ Who can say ?” he continued, after a pause. “ It may be that he is only driven away, perhaps as far as the Faroe Islands. In that case, we shall see him again next spring !” This was the only consolation that Nicholas could afford the forsaken Dörte through the mediating lips of her best friend, Marie. It was fearful news for the devoted girl. She uttered no complaint : but mourned in secret retirement through the autumn and long winter, casting her slender hope forward to the approaching spring. But when this passed away, and summer too decayed, and still no news arrived of her poor cast-away, she hoped no longer, but submitted peacefully to her melancholy fate. Ludolf was as one dead, and all that was permitted her was to mourn for him in her heart as deeply as though he had been her husband.

During a long series of years Dörte continued faithful to her resolution, and steadfastly refused numerous proposals of marriage made to her by young and well-enough-to-do pilots. Dörte was still pretty, and not altogether without fortune. She was the owner of a neat small house unencumbered with debt, and a tolerably large garden whose vegetables and fruit comfortably supplied her with all the necessaries of life. In addition to such charms, Dörte acquired a peculiar grace from the settled sorrow which she bore for her lost Ludolf, and this, on account of its rarity, went far to gain the affections of the warm-hearted Blankenese youth.

Still the most advantageous proposals found a cold reception with the mourner. She needed no especial protection ; since she was always sure of a safe residence with her married sister at Altona. Still less did she want a hand to work for her : for she could herself earn all that she required, and more. The heavy uncertain times of uninterrupted war at length came on, when few possessions were secure : least of all, such as were unprotected, or defended only by a weak and still handsome woman. Dörte, with her chief valuables, sought temporary refuge at Alb, and committed her house meanwhile to the care of a distant relation, named Jonas. He, much her elder, had in earlier years, like most of the dwellers upon the Lower Elbe, served at sea, and he had much to say of his many adventures upon that stormy world, and many wondrous tales at his command, which he was always ready to communicate to a willing listener, for he spoke gladly, and with a vein, too, of self-complacent fluency. Since Ludolf's disappearance, Jonas, without desiring any counter-services, or particular courtesies, had with indefatigable self-sacrificing care, taken charge of the orphaned maiden, and devoted himself to her interests. Dörte could not but be gratefully attached to him for his disinterested attention, and she was kindly disposed towards him, with-

out feeling at all more warmly than was justified by the fond regard still entertained by her for the memory of her poor Ludolf.

The amicable relation between the two lasted without variation, and without the least increase or decrease—a proof of its freedom from all passion—till after the end of the war of liberation. Peace being concluded, Dörte returned to her hereditary tenement, where the old seaman greeted her with cordial joy. The house was as clean as it could be, and, as if for a bride, decked with garlands and wreaths. A tear or two stole into the eyes of Dörte as her hand pressed that of Jonas, in grateful acknowledgment. The old man, poor and roofless as he was, had so much accustomed himself to the habitation of his kinswoman, that it was heavy to him to depart from it. Dörte saw this, and it grieved her to discharge so good and faithful a house-keeper. On the very threshold, she begged him to continue to share the small dwelling with her.

Jonas looked at her with eyes glittering with joy.

"Art thou in earnest, Dörte?" he asked, when he found that her look was not at variance with her words.

"Quite in earnest, cousin!" she replied, "and why not? Art thou not poor? and mayst thou not fall sick? who should nurse thee at such a time but thy relation?"

"Dörte," exclaimed Jonas, suddenly and passionately, whilst he stretched out his hand to the maiden, already past her prime. "Dörte, let us be for ever together. I am an old forlorn fellow, with nothing in the world but a half-leaky fishing-boat: and thou hast long long ago lost that which was dearest to thine heart. Dörte, thy hand upon it. Let us e'en make a couple. Odds lobsters and limpets, I am sure we shall suit one another."

Such a proposal, the maiden had certainly not expected. She hesitated, and was confused. Jonas, honest-heartedly repeated his artless suit, and she was moved by his attachment. Every thing that Jonas had done for her came quickly to her mind, and she had done nothing in return but offer a word or two of worthless thanks. The good-humoured veteran was not quite indifferent to her. How she would miss him if he were to quit her altogether! Still she hesitated; but at length she gave him her hand with the promise, within three days, to make known her decision to him.

"Hurrah!" cried Jonas, tossing his pilot hat, like a young sailor, into the air, "and in three days the pretty Blankenese frigate will surrender at discretion!"

Jonas was not deceived. On the third day Dörte gave her hand with the promise, after publicly solemnised betrothal, to become his wife at the altar.

It is customary amongst the Blankenese to hold the betrothal at the house of a friend, and to invite thither, not relations and acquaintance only, but every one who has a liking to drink a glass off to the health of the spouses. The well-doing Nicholas, the former companion and friend of Ludolf, offered to furnish the betrothal of Dörte with Jonas. Next Sunday was chosen. Guests were promised without number, and merriment without hindrance or interruption.

Men are men at Blankenese as elsewhere. The prospect of a good meal and still better liquor, allured almost every young pilot to Nicholas's door. All were in the best spirits, and extravagantly jovial like sailors at a merry-making. If the company did not drink to excess, it was because their notions of excess differed from those of other people.

Conversation kept up the entertainment pretty steadily for a time; but continuous discourse at length gave way beneath the influence of strong grog, and fiery Portuguese wine. By way of a diversion, Nicholas proposed a game, to which most seafarers are passionately addicted, and which here found many eager to engage in it.

At a measured distance, it might be thirty or forty paces—a ship made of pasteboard or wood was fixed fast in the ground, and in such a manner that the pointed ship's beak was turned towards the company. At this beak, every pilot, off-hand, had to hurl his sharp-pointed sailor's knife, and to split it if he could. A thousand chances to one the player failed; for it required long practice, steady aim, and an unerring eye to hit the mark. All threw, and none succeeded. The majority went wide of the beak, and those who did best just grazed the mark with their knives, without splitting it.

"Ay!" said Nicholas, whilst the bridegroom essayed his dexterity, "if Ludolf were here, we should not have long to wait. I'd engage he should hit it ninety-nine times out of the hundred; hit it and split it too! It is a thousand pities the lad had so soon to gulp salt-water. We should all have had to take our caps off to him, I can tell you. Isn't it so, Dörte?"

"Leave him in peace," answered the faded bride. "He has long since slept."

The game proceeded, and was prolonged with more zeal than success, since every one burned to quit the field a victor. Meanwhile, a crowd of spectators had gathered, and amongst them many strangers, some from the adjacent villages, and some from the opposite banks of the Elbe, who had crossed over to spend their Sunday night in the romantic environs of Blankenese. Old weather-beaten pilots were in the groups, one or another of whom had begged for a throw; although all, to the great enjoyment of the merry Blankenese, had to retire again without having achieved so much as a hit.

The sun began already to gild the stream of the Elbe, when there pressed through the host of beholders, a broad-shouldered man,—a stranger to all. His complexion was almost of an olive-brown, his cheeks were indented with deep furrows and some sabre cuts, and the snow-white hair that hung, not in the best order, over his broad and massive forehead, stood in complete contradiction with the remainder of his muscular figure. His dress was a strange mixture of threadbare military attire, and southern corsair costume; leathern stockings were on his legs, and sandals on his feet.

So singular a character could not fail to draw all eyes upon him, and none knew what to make of him.

For a few minutes the stranger watched the game with eyes of fire, and smiled as each successive pilot shot widely of his mark.

"Grant me a throw," said he, stepping forward all at once.

"You!" replied one standing near him, not a little surprised at the purity of his Low Saxon dialect. "You! Can you handle a knife?"

"Give me a supper, or your ear for a two hours' tale that I will tell you, and I promise you to split the ship's beak ten times running!"

"Friend!" answered Nicholas; "thou must be the devil himself an thou dost that. I have known but one who could boast such adroitness without bragging. Thou dost not look as though thou hadst seen much salt water. Nevertheless, ten throws shall be conceded thee."

"Done! Lend me a knife."

"Halt! halt! boy," said Nicholas quickly. "A stranger must not mix in our game without penal conditions. Thou hast the ten throws given thee; and, if thou hit, meat and drink as much as thy heart desires. But miss once, not only hast thou forfeited our hospitality, but thou shalt into the bargain be lashed disgracefully to the bounds of our ground. Art thou content?"

"These are hard conditions," answered the Unknown. "Howbeit, I stand to my request. Give me room; and, that you may see all's fair with me, I add, of my own free will, ten paces to the distance."

The pilots regarded one another with surprise, and with a kind of awe made way for the curious stranger, who now boldly stepped forward. Women and girls directed their wise eyes upon the confident undaunted man.

The mysterious visitor now measured off ten long paces, took the knife betwixt forefinger and thumb, and then, spending hardly a moment in taking aim, hurled it with such force against the little ship, that, whirring and quivering, it flew and fixed itself fast in the crooked beak. The stranger smiled within himself, and waited quietly until the knife was handed him again.

"That was a master throw, old boy," said Jonas. "Aim as well every time, and thou shalt have my knife for a keepsake."

The stranger nodded his reply; raised the knife to his forehead, and immediately launched it again at the little bark. It again penetrated up to the haft in the thin wood.

"Good luck to you, old shark! Bravo! Bravo! That's a sea-man!" called all the pilots at once to the masterly darter. "You are no fool, whoever you are!" Dörte fixed her eye upon the aged man; and, whilst she strove in the weather-beaten face to recognise known traits, she fetched deep and heavy breath, and repeatedly changed colour.

The stranger, unconcerned at the approbation which he drew from every side, flung quick, one after another, the remaining eight times, and so exactly to the mark, that the blade ever went into the same hole. The astonishment of the beholders rose to enthusiasm.

"By the everlasting sea!" said Nicholas, "if I did not know that

Ludolf had come to an unhappy end, I should swear that thou art he!"

"And I would answer — Thou art Nicholas!" answered the victor, smiling, "hadst thou any look of the man who some twenty years ago put to sea on the same day with the young Ludolf."

"Why, thou art then ——"

"Yea, I am, old friend — that same Ludolf of whom none knew whether he were dead or alive, and who now returns, in middle life, an old man, to his beloved home."

The two friends were in each other's arms. At the same time a loud despairing cry was heard from the crowd of bystanders. Dörte had swooned. Jonas trembled as he lifted her up, whilst tears trickled down his sun-burnt cheeks.

"Poor Dörte!" said he, "thou art born to misfortune."

"Dörte!" repeated Ludolf thoughtfully. He approached where she lay fainting; but she was instantly removed, and borne into Nicholas's dwelling.

"Dörte!" repeated the returned mariner.

"Well, you must learn it at last," said Nicholas; "and better now than later. Dörte, thy old and faithful sweetheart, who waited twenty years for thy return, has been to-day betrothed to old Jonas. Why did you not come, man, a week sooner?"

Ludolf answered not. He extricated himself from Nicholas, and, at Jonas's side, entered the house of the hospitable pilot.

The following day at evening Ludolf, quite alone, entered the dwelling of his formerly beloved. He found there, besides Dörte, his old friend Nicholas, and Jonas, who, with strange feelings, looked upon him who had for so many years been regarded as a tenant of the grave. Ludolf silently saluted the men. To Dörte he reached out his hand; and, whilst he grasped that of the maiden, he gazed long into her honest eyes. She was deeply moved. After a pause he spoke: —

"Dörte," said he, "I come to thee to give a faithful report of my past agitated life, and thereby to secure myself in thy opinion against all suspicion of having done thee wrong. My story told, I will take leave of thee, and go again into the wide world. There are ships enough that will spare a berth to an old weather-beaten sailor.

Dörte sighed. Jonas shook his grey head, and muttered some unintelligible words.

"I long to hear you," said Nicholas. "Since you disappeared amongst the English ships in the Northern Ocean, I know nothing of you."

"That disappearing," replied Ludolf, "was an English rascality. My little craft behaved well in the storm; and, with God's help, I should soon have worked my way to you, if that devil, Jack ——"

"Jack! What! Wild Jack!" cried Nicholas, interrupting the narrator.

"The same! That fellow was my curse. But listen. When the

roaring sea tore me from you, and I was driven by the storm towards the rising sails, I made sure of escaping the threatened danger by attaching myself to the flotilla. I made for it therefore as fast as I could. The English soon observed my motions, and made me friendly signals. I was not long in reaching the brig sailing nearest me, and her captain called me to come on board. He offered to take my vessel in tow, and you may imagine I did not reject the proposal; I went on board the brig, and did voluntary sailor's service. The very next night, as I lay tired with toil in my hammock, a rough hand shook me out of sleep. Looking up, I saw by the dull light of a ship's lantern the hateful and distorted features of Wild Jack. The captain of the brig stood beside him—'A man overboard,' says he to me. 'Quick my man, and take his place.' I was up in an instant, and fell to work, and from that hour I had no peace on board. The captain was a brute. He scuttled my own good ship, and degraded me to a slave. I could do nothing right, and the cat-o'-nine-tails was for ever hanging over me. In my deplorable situation I could only smother my fury, and surrender to my lot. To rebel against it would have been madness. I laboured, therefore, and hoarded up my thoughts of revenge. The prospect of escape supported me through the continual tortures to which the cruelty of that unforgiving Jack exposed me. Six months passed, and we had visited many harbours of Portugal and Spain. At last we cast anchor on the coast of England. I was placed in the custody of Jack, who took me ashore, and the same day entered me as a sailor on board an English frigate. Jack, I was sure, stood in dread of my revenge, and planned this way of getting rid of me. He was satisfied, too, that paradise did not await me in my new service.

"For nearly ten years was I dragged through every sea, and forced to fight in innumerable engagements for England's glory. By degrees I grew callous to all the vicissitudes of fortune, and reckless as to my own destiny. I despaired wholly of my deliverance. It was, however, my fortune to be taken prisoner in a sea-fight by the French, and the idea of freedom became again as lively as ever. In the midst of my dreams malicious fate again clutched me in her iron fist. In sight of the French shore, a storm surprised us, which in its fury drove us far out into the Mediterranean. We lost bowsprit and fockmast, and suffered in other respects important damage. This was, however, but the prelude to the horror that awaited us. When the tempest had raged itself out, and we, still in a high-swelling sea, were busy in rendering our frigate once more navigable, two Barbary corsairs overtook us. In the state of our vessel, flight was out of the question, and surrender we would not; so we got our half-wreck ready, as well as we could, for resistance. The French fought with desperate courage, and we prisoners came not much short of them. But, gallantly as we defended ourselves, we were obliged to yield at last to superior force.

"The Moriscoes boarded us, mutilated the wounded that lay about, and then tossed them into the sea. The captain and all the officers

were barbarously massacred, the rest of the crew put in chains, and stowed away between decks of the two rovers.

"Thus were the hopes cherished through ten tedious years of suffering for ever annihilated. Slavery, our destination, was the grave that swallowed them up. Upon the second night we could hear that the pirates cast anchor; and presently after, our masters opened the hatches, and bade us ascend. It was a lovely night, wonderfully warm, and perfumed as if with spices. Behind us the sea gleamed and beamed in fairy lustre. Before us, on a fertile coast, against a gently-sloping mountain, leaned a white shining mass of houses with tall and slender towers. It was Algiers. Boats manned with black oarsmen swarmed about our two corsairs, and richly clad Turks of quality came on board to bargain for the strongest of the captives. After some chaffering I fell into the hands of a dark-looking man, who appointed me an overseer of his garden. As the man was not naturally cruel, I might have found my position tolerable, could I have suppressed the consciousness that I was a slave, dependent on the caprice and ill-humour of a stranger. It is true I suffered no want. My situation, indeed, was in many respects far better than it had been with the English. The climate was unhealthy; many of my fellow-prisoners died, and in me it produced a temper bordering on madness. My powerful nature, however, overcame every attack, and for five long years I suffered only in pain of soul.

"One day, about noon, I saw a ship sailing under the French flag at no great distance from the shore opposite the harbour of Algiers. It was making for *El Colea*. My longing for home, for Europe, which for a season had slumbered in my bosom, grew at the sight so lively within me, that I forgot every danger that surrounded me. It was the hour of the siesta, which every Turk, Arab, and Moor passes in his house or tent. The very slaves whom I had to superintend slept in the shade of cool rock grottoes. I dared what only unmeasured presumption or utter despair durst venture. I fastened a signal that I made of the French colours to a long pole that lay near me, and lifted it, making it beckon towards the ship. Trembling with joy I saw that my signal was observed—saw that they lowered and manned a boat. It was time for the speediest flight. I almost leaped down the steep cliffs, and reached the strand at the moment that my flight was discovered. Oh, I did not loiter! I plunged into the gently billowing sea, which received me as a mother her child. I divided the waves with the strength of a giant, and reached the French boat in safety. I was, and remained—rescued!

"Nevertheless, my wanderings were not yet ended. During my voyage to France, I learnt, from the crew of the cutter, all that was then going forward in the world. The subjugation of Germany, the insurrection of the Spaniards, Napoleon's determination of invading Russia—all were communicated to me. The French tried to persuade me to take military service with them, but my mind was fixed fast upon my subjugated country. I declined their offers, under the pretext that the unhealthy climate had rendered me unfit for fur-

er service. I would not seem ungrateful to my preservers; neither could I take up arms against my own country.

"The ship was to put in at Barcelona, as it carried ammunition and despatches for the French troops in Spain. Hereupon I built my further plan. I was not restrained from setting foot ashore; and, once ashore, it was easy for me, with nightfall, to escape. Misfortune had hitherto accompanied me. Now fortune was my friend. I soon fell in with a troop of Spaniards — one of those Guerilla bands which aversed the oppressed land in all directions. I joined them as a volunteer, which was the easier for me to do as I spoke the language of the country fluently. With this mad-bold Guerilla people, I now fought against our common oppressors, until the fall of the conqueror released the desolated land from the scourge of hated strangers.

"The prospects of once more treading the soil of my native land roke upon me now indeed with reality, and my aching heart bounded with strange joy. I embarked at Saint Sebastian on board a Dutch merchantman, which took me, worn and impoverished, on condition of my serving as a common sailor during the passage. I trusted to the sea gain, and again she betrayed me. It seemed as though the ocean were my life's foe, and would not be satisfied until she had ruined me effectually. We were scarce in deep water, when the wind veered round, a storm came on, and we had to think ourselves lucky when we stranded on the sands at the outflow of the Scheld. Poor, old to look upon, yet strong as youth still in mind and heart, I stepped again upon my native earth. I begged my way, straight across the country, to the Elbe, whose broad stream spares me, indeed, only that at my hearth and home I may feel the pangs of a crushed life, and, stripped of every thing, bereaved of every joy and every hope, I may pine away, lowly, and unwept.

"I have done."

The silvered head of Ludolf dropped upon his bosom, and heavy tears fell from his eyes, as it seemed, in spite of him. There was not one of his auditors who dared to interrupt the profound mute sorrow of the afflicted man. Jonas was the first who stood up. He shook his head, as he had done before, and then approached his long-lost, newly-found associate. He laid his heavy hand upon Ludolf's shoulders with a gentle pressure, and when the latter looked up aroused, Jonas fixed upon him his keen blue eye. Good-will, the most honest, cordial and kindly, was speaking in his gaze.

"Thou art unthankful, Ludolf," said the old son of the sea; "thy lot is not so heavy as thou sayest. Up, man, and come along with me."

"Whither?" asked Ludolf, in some amaze.

"Not very far," said Jonas, in reply, and smiling oddly.

Ludolf arose. The old man took his hand, and led him across the room to Dörte, who, pale, motionless, and as if SPIRIT-LESS — for she looked more like an image carved in stone than a living creature — sat upon the bench by the stove.

"Dörte!" — the warm-blooded ancient bespake the numbed maiden — "thy heart, thy staunch woman's heart, cleaves at this day, as closely as twenty years ago it did, to Ludolf. He belongs to thee, just as through rough and through smooth he has ever belonged to thee. And hear me, Dörte. Look thou but kindly upon me, and let me stay as in time past, an inmate and a friend, faithfully caring for thee, in thine house. Let me but — but look here — see — there — take thine old lover back to thee, and Heaven make ye both happy — for ye deserve it, if any in the world do!"

"By the four winds of heaven!" exclaimed Nicholas, "'tis spoken like a seaman. Let me hug thee, old Seal! — Long life to the bridegroom and bride!"

"Long, long life!" shouted old Jonas through a sob, and flourishing his hat to show his earnestness.

Ludolf and Dörte were in each other's arms, and speechless. Not one audible breath told of the transformation that a moment had wrought within them. Their eyes only spoke, and there might be read happiness unutterable.

After a long silence, Dörte tore herself from Ludolf's enfolding arms, and threw herself upon Jonas's bosom. A sisterly kiss was felt upon his cheek, passing on its way to the depths of the mariner's stout heart.

"Stay with us always — always — always — dear, good, noble friend!" she exclaimed with unrepressed emotion. "We will love and honour thee!"

"Be happy, Dörte!" was the reply of Jonas, "and trust me, I shall be happy too!"

He tried to say something more, but the tears came into his eyes, and blinded him. His throat grew hot, and choked his utterance. The most he could do was to whistle a sea song, and this he did imperfectly enough.

Within four weeks there was a wedding solemnized at Blankenese, which every pilot honoured with his attendance. The favourite sport which had so unexpectedly introduced Ludolf to the recognition of his friends held its well-earned place amongst the festivities of the day, and was pursued with redoubled fervour. This time, too, Ludolf proved victor; and, after him, old Jonas hit the mark oftenest.

It was never understood that the worthy seaman repented of his magnanimous surrender. He died, far-stricken in years, lamented alike sorrowfully by the happy wife and husband — rendered happy by his own generous and self-renouncing act.

THE POLKA, CONSIDERED AS A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT.

BY A RINGLEADER.

— Nunc pede libero
Pulsanda tellus. HORACE.

THE prevalent question among the dancing members of the Clubs about two months ago was, "Is the Polka to be laughed down — or learnt?"

The former alternative was adopted, by an immense majority, on the first appearance of the dance in the private ball-rooms; and a powerful Opposition was forthwith organised.

Young England led the attack; confident in its powers of sarcastic predication — fond of running a tilt (for practice) at any wind-mill — and clinging consistently, in this instance, to the choreographic traditions of the May-pole.

All the renowned waltzers, to a man, followed on the same side; feeling it rather hard to be cast down from their high estate, after years of meritorious exertion; unbelted champions, starting fresh, amidst a crowd of nameless rivals, for a new reputation. They represented the "finality" party among dancers; maintaining the *status quo* of the ball-room, as Lord John, after the Reform Bill, did that of the House; and for the same reason. Like him, they were satisfied with the "movement" in which their own laurels were earned; and saw, in a progress which threatened to supersede their sway, a reprehensible spirit of insubordination to the existing order of things. Accordingly, when the first Polka-Ball was given (not a hundred miles from the Grosvenor Gate, Hyde Park), they went about industriously filling parental ears with vague reports as to the freedom and *abandon* of the new dance; and predicting the speedy relaxation of all wholesome discipline, and social *convenance*, unless this "Park-Lane Conspiracy" (as they called it) should be promptly nipped in the bud.

Next may be mentioned a numerous clique of aristocratic *blasés* and *flâneurs*; and especially the drawing-room loungers of the Traveller's and Crockford's, who declared it the correct thing to vote the new dance a "bore." Their indolent example had more influence in the Club world than all Young England's polished shafts, and the prophecies of the peevish, put together.

But none of these drawing-room Sets could compare, for the vigour and pertinacity of their resistance, with the elderly beaux down stairs

in the dining-rooms. With them it was, so to speak, a question of life or death. They gnashed their mineral teeth, and stirred up their purple-black curls, as they sat over their claret, revolving their approaching discomfiture. Small chance now for their creaky joints against the supple elasticity of twenty-five! No more walking through the diagrams of *Pété* and *la poule*, with an easy stiffness, as though they *could* do steps if they liked — and rather wished it were the fashion. The very girls of eighteen, hitherto their great trust and stay, would now find them out as readily as the women of forty-five — experienced in skin-partings, and pivoted incisors. They damned the thing roundly, as “a clumsy peasant-dance; a senseless, boisterous romp; a vulgar, village trot; which they, for their parts, would never countenance.” A true *conclusion*, at any rate; unless there be a mesmeric art to infuse life and contractility into cotton *gastrocnemii*.*

But besides these, strange to say, there were scores of well-built, active young fellows, whose interest, had they had the *nous* to see it, was to have joyfully seized on the Polka as the ladder of their advancement in the estimation of the fair; but who were, on the contrary, to be heard growling and grumbling at its introduction, with an unaccountable blindness; which Elderly Adolescence wondered at, but cunningly promoted; reflecting, with something between a chuckle and a sigh — “*Si la jeunesse savait! — si la vieillesse pouvait!*”

And then, in the distance, the environs of London, with pious Clapham at their head, lifted up their voice, and cried aloud as one man against the licentious innovation; a new infraction of their pet commandment — the gem of the suburban decalogue — the palladium of suburban purity — “Thou shalt not touch thy partner's waist.” The which pharisaic clamour, to say truth, was not wholly without an echo in Carlton Gardens and the Squares; where a sort of hybrid sanctity, that goes to Little Bethel and the Opera by turns, is occasionally to be met with; scarcely out-done by the sectarianism of the *banlieue*, in transcendental fine feeling, and vulgar fastidiousness. It is observable, however, with respect to this metropolitan methodism (and herein it differs from the unction of the outskirts), that it seldom springs from a *gratuitous* animosity to fun; but usually has its origin (we do not say its excuse) in some such lame reason as inspired Byron's querulous tirade against waltzing (to which the public common sense has long ago done justice). When, for example, at a Park-Lane Polka-ball, you see, in some corner, a pair of upturned

* Vulgarly called the *calves*; being (to use the language of an anatomical professor to whom we referred the point) “the great muscular masses which act on the heels, so as to straighten out the feet, and raise the body on the toes, as in dancing.” [The professor gives us some curious particulars about these muscles; how they are largely developed in the Parisian ladies, who have to pick their way on tip-toe over the round stone paving of their muddy streets; and how, on the contrary, they are comparatively diminutive in the otherwise strongly formed London drayman, by reason of his habitually walking, flat-footed, in heavy, wooden-soled high-lows; with other entertaining observations, new to us, and for which we wish we had space.] — *ED. H. M.*

eyeballs, giving a sort of telegraphic publicity to their owner's horror at the corruption of the Age; then, dear reader, look down at Indignant Virtue's feet—and nine times in ten you shall find them gnarled and knotted with bunions. Now, knowing bunions to be painful, and the sight of unattainable pleasure tantalizing, one can make allowance in such a case for a little virtuous dyspepsia. Whereas one shrinks with unmitigated disgust from a pious Peckhamite—reveling in Cant for its own unctuous sake; and propagating its effete jargon, for the mere pleasure of snuffling through his nose.

Happily, the opposition of these fanatics, whether thinly scattered in the west-end districts, or teeming in the region of back-gardens and brickfields, was more feverish than effective. Little Bethel has been losing ground ever since Boz gave Stiggins that ducking under the pump. "Tea-and-bible" is found out for a dilute sort of religion after all; and keen noses have smelt something very like gin in all that piety-and-water.

So much for the Opposition; which, notwithstanding its weak points, comprised some powerful Interests, and presented on the whole a very formidable aspect.

And now for the partizans of the Polka,—who were they? Who took the field against this bristling array? Who ran the gauntlet of Club wit—and bore down the *vis inertiae* of Social indifference—and unhorsed Young England—and swept the fanatics clean out of the field:—and at last, by dint of sheer energy, carried their point, and compelled folks to recognise the Polka as one of the undeniable "Issues of Time"—another "Great Fact" like the League?

The glory of this achievement belongs exclusively to THE YOUNG LADIES OF LONDON.

Yes, the Polka is a conquest of Feminine Genius; established on British soil, and imposed as a yoke on the recalcitrant London Clubs, by the tact, courage, and perseverance of our high-mettled English girls.

And truly it was no light undertaking. Their work was cut out for them, as the saying is. They had a twofold contest to engage. Parental scruples were first to be assuaged; and the Clubs to be reduced to obedience afterwards. The former was a matter of diplomatic negotiation; the latter of pitched battles. Of the negotiations we know nothing but their result. They were carried on by Committees with closed doors, in the boudoirs—now turned into diplomatic *bureaux*. The battles came off, of a night, in the ball-rooms.

The ball-room is a woman's chosen battle-ground. There she comes forth in her war-paint, fully equipped. Her accustomed foot treads, firmler than man's, on the glossy brown-holland. She measures the enemy with wary eye; undazzled by wax-light. Does she appear absorbed in Lanner's airy music? She is elaborating the theory of her campaign. Seems she lost in the soft flattery of her assiduous partner? She is scheming the details of his defeat. In arts even greater than in arms, she inclines to a Fabian policy; and leisurely matures her plots. She knows when to cool her adversary with ice; when to mix his blood with petulant champagne. Sometimes she

tempts him to a summary issue, and a sudden fall. Sometimes she leads him on to tipsy-cake; and conquers—after supper.

The tactics of the Polka struggle were simple but dexterous; insidious manœuvres at first, suddenly exchanged at the right moment for a series of dashing charges.

During the first few days the young ladies were satisfied with luring over a few deserters from the enemy's camp.

These they made much of—complimented—caressed. They served (unconsciously) as decoys; exciting the jealousy of their companions and rivals, by the unusual favours they enjoyed.

Every night witnessed larger defections from the Opposition; whose losses, thus continued in an accelerating ratio, soon began to tell seriously upon their strength. Their position became alarming.

Suddenly the young ladies closed their ranks, and joined battle.

No more coaxing now! They came flashing out with their ready weapons, cut-and-thrust; home questions—subtle taunts—keen sneers—cruel allusions. They had brought the edge of their contempt to a perfect razor, and gave no quarter; but “cut mercy, with a sharp knife, to the bone.”

The Opposition was seized with a panic. Each successive ball told with more signal effect upon their gaping ranks. Their very leaders went privily and learned the dance; to be prepared for all hazards.

Their nimble-witted antagonists, seeing the day to be theirs, adopted a “short and easy method” with the shattered remnant of the foe. They no longer vouchsafed to be sarcastic; but slew with a cool disdain. The contemptuous intonation of their simple “Do you dance the Polka?” cut short all irrelevant discussion. Until you *did*, your conversation was limited to a bare moiety of that frugal allowance—“yea yea, and nay nay.” They had no ears for more. You vainly sought to fortify your negative with some faint witticism. You were beneath a rejoinder; not worth pulverising. You might think yourself lucky to be asked by some scornful beauty, as she turned off on her heel, whether you had “ever heard of Coulon?” or to have the Polka-column of the *Times*’ advertisements commended “to your private meditations.”

The result of the conflict is now matter of history.

Young England, with a transitional adroitness that might awaken ministerial envy, has slipped in, rudder-like, at the tail of the movement which it lately opposed.

The detected Elders, with characteristic *savoir-vivre*, have quietly retreated to the *rez-de-chaussée* realities of life. Their soul delights no longer in the tumultuous dance. Veiled is the vitreous lustre of their white smiles; they turn their incorrodible incisors on the fowl instead of the fair; and do execution with the edge, instead of the flat, of their weapons.

Indignant Virtue (with the upturned eyeballs) was stricken down in the first battle by a shrewd lunge from Miss B——; who enquired with curving lip, “Do you think, because you have corns, there shall be no more pipe and tabor?” Poor *Virtus indignans*,

touched in so tender a point, limped off to its proper sphere in the back drawing-room : where it finds rest for its sore feet beneath the Card-table ; and forgets the naughtiness of Jullien ; and takes refuge from vanity—in tricks.

Meanwhile the more fantastic (and less distorted) toes are vigorously beating triple time to the new measure. Intense emulation prevails among the dancers. Fresh chances of distinction incite the hitherto unknown ; and the old celebrities of the waltz struggle hard to keep the lead in their new orbit. In the re-distribution of honours the ancient reputations are not all lost ; nor every one maintained. Some vicissitudes are inevitable ; some falling stars ; some crescent satellites. More than one late opponent of the dance has reason to be glad of his defeat ; last season a cipher—now, a Name.

And these graceful forms that whirl with them, lightly encircled ;—be these the victorious fair, late so merciless in combat ? Strange ! that those softly-beaming eyes could smite down an enemy with a single taunting flash ! that those lips, now rosy-smiling, could curl with such peremptory disdain ; and write a sneer, in one stroke, on the very soul ! They are all softness now, the little darlings ! all considerate generosity to the conquered : and each, as she stops panting for breath, prettily declares herself “ vanquished at last ! ”

This brief account of the Polka Movement may be received with some doubt in the Provinces ; so signal a victory against such heavy odds will there, perhaps, be thought improbable ; but the facts are fresh in all London recollections, west of Regent-street.

If, indeed, the Opposition had had a settled plan ; if the Parental authorities had not halted between two opinions, things might have taken a different turn. But, fortunately, they were undecided ; and while they wavered, the young ladies acted. Action against hesitation any day ; courage against numbers all the world over ; and so the Polka became a *fait accompli*.

And now that the movement party is fairly dominant—and the Ball-room Revolution of '44, like its political prototypes, consecrated by success ; let us estimate the result of the struggle, and see whether the young ladies have brought about a real progress in social enjoyment, or a mere capricious oscillation of fashion.

But is it a question worth discussion ? Is the Polka, after all, a matter of any importance ?

Certainly, calling to mind the established rule of this “ great commercial country,” that the true worth of any thing is what it will fetch in the market ; considering that the Polka cannot be “ bought cheap and sold dear ”—like silk, cotton, and other important commodities ; that it cannot be monopolised, nor speculated in, so as to become a source of rapid fortune to some, and sudden bankruptcy to others ; that it cannot be adulterated and exported for sale in foreign parts, so as to enrich our beloved country ; nor, in a word, promote any of the workings of our beautiful commercial system ; considering all these things, we can hardly attribute much importance to the Polka. We see that it has nothing to do with *Business* ; that it is beside the main chance ; and touches not the significant concerns of life. We

feel that a mere dance, serving only to set a few hundred thousand young hearts beating with fun and pleasure, which are notoriously frivolous, must be itself of trivial moment.

And yet, on second thoughts, what were this Important Business, but for this Frivolous Pleasure? If the silk, above-mentioned, were not *pleasing* to the eye, and the cotton *pleasant* to the touch; if sarsenet for ornament, and calico for use, were not, each in its way, *pleasurable* to man; what would become of the "Important Business" transacted in these articles? What is the merchant meditating his ventures, or the dealer retailing his wares, but a servant of Pleasure? What is all this "buying cheap and selling dear" but a subordinate drudgery, ministering, afar off, more or less indirectly, to that very Pleasure which, in its direct manifestations, the drudges condemn as frivolous? Evidently, that which ministers to the frivolous, must be frivolous itself; nor can Business have any importance, but that which it draws, at second-hand, from Pleasure. Least of all should the care-worn Trader despise these bubbles of Pleasure, which the very breath of his life is consumed in blowing. He whose joints have stiffened under the irksome desk, and whose hair has grown gray in the narrow counting-house, to furnish the mere accessories of the dance, should, least of all men, despise dancing; or call our Polka trivial. If the kernel be insignificant—what is the husk? If it be waste to pass an hour in discussing the dish—what is it to spend a lifetime in supplying the garnish? Answer us, ye Merchants of Silk and Cotton; grave venders of a filament,—a gloss: if we, who dance the Polka, are simpletons; what are you, who fetch and carry our trappings?

In good truth, this Polka Movement, so far from being insignificant, is a Fact considerably more real, and less delusive, than several Revolutions of greater celebrity, and higher historical pretensions. It is considerably less delusive, for example, than the French Revolution—

"Pooh-pooh," cries a bass voice.

Don't be alarmed, dear young ladies, for the safety of your cause; the assertion is a bold one, but we will make it good; notwithstanding Political Philosophy's "Pooh-pooh."

Yes! we affirm that this foolish village-dance, which has set hundreds of thousands of young hearts palpitating with novel pleasure, is less unreal and less delusive, in its influence on the sum of human happiness, than the French Revolution:—which has left the starving populace as hungry and destitute as it found them; the Oppressors changed, the Oppression the same; an Aristocracy demolished, a Plutocracy dominant; a Financial substituted for a Hereditary Feudalism; Barons of the Counting-house for Barons of the Castle; Capital gaining what Birth has lost; and, —coined from broken Coronets,—the same GOLD master still!

Ever, dear young ladies, eschew the glittering surface, and run your needle into the heart of things; so shall you often find one steadfast Fact lurking under diversified fluctuations of Form; and many a gigantic Shadow of historic change shall prove less real than

the tiny Substance of one added pastime—a newly measured chime—a rustic dance.

But quitting these historic parallels, let us explain why, and in what sense, we think the Polka superior to our ordinary ball-room dances.

We shall not be accused of taking a very transcendental point of view, if we assume, 1st., that a dance must be either a mere physical exercise, like the gamboling of colts in a field, set to music;—or else an *expressive* representation of human feelings in the universal language of gesture and motion: and, 2dly, that in proportion as a dance loses the mere physical character, and assumes a higher expressive power, it rises in artistic beauty and merit. Let us try our ordinary dances by this test.

The Country dance is a good specimen of the *measured gambol*; not by any means to be despised, after two or three o'clock in the morning, as an escape-valve for residuary animal spirits—(how else would the poor mammas *ever* get home to bed?)—but holding much the same rank in the hierarchy of dances that the farce bears in that of dramatic representations.

The Quadrille lends itself to figures of great diversity and expressive power, but which incessant repetition has rendered utterly meaningless. As some popular melody tortured, Ixion-like, on the ceaseless wheels of the street organs, falls dead on the vexed ear; so these eternally-reiterated quadrilles no longer reach the nerves, and hardly even compel the muscles to their void, mechanic rhythm. Hence the egregious anomaly of dancing “without steps;” the flat-footed funereal pacing to and fro, which our Elderly friends maintain to be the gentlemanly thing. The first set, so performed, seems to us the very type of listless, blank ennui.

The Waltz is indeed a wonderful invention; of all our ball-room dances the most graceful and fascinating. Words are weak to sing its praises. Two forms, lightly interwoven, float on the same wave of sound; they feel its undulations together; together their circling footsteps kiss the ground; every pulse of the harmony divides itself between them; they have no longer any separate sensations; their nerves vibrate in one rhythm; every thrill is a participated pleasure,—and doubled by division: for

“If you divide suffering and pain, you may
Diminish till it is consumed away;
If you divide pleasure, and love, and bliss,
Each part exceeds the whole; and we know not
How much, while any yet remains unshared
Of Pleasure may be gained—of Sorrow spared.”

It is this perfect interfusion of feeling—this ideal mingling of two natures till they “move as reeds in a single stream,” that makes the waltz, when poetically felt, so delicious. It is, as it were, a triple

intermarriage of Masculine Strength and Feminine Grace with each other, and with Art; and a beautiful Trinity they compose —

“Two, mutually enfolded; Art, the third,
Between them, in the circle of his arms
Enwinding both.”

Nevertheless, this charming dance has a deficiency; it wants *incident*. There is no dramatic action, no representation of preliminary trials giving zest to a final pleasure; and this detracts considerably from its merit as a dance of expression.

Doubtless it was the perception of this fault, this monotony in the simple waltz, that gave rise to the invention of the Cotillon; which is a waltz preceded by some pretty coquetting about the choice of partners.

It is precisely this dramatic character, deficient in the waltz, that constitutes the principal charm of the Polka, which is as full of incident as of grace; combining all the life and freedom of the peasant's unconstrained hilarity, with a tone of softness and refinement super-added in its passage through Vienna and Paris. Its universal adoption is indeed a sufficient proof of its merit. There must be some touch of Nature in a movement, which thus, so to speak, “makes the whole world kin;” spreading through Europe, from nation to nation; and kindling with a common enthusiasm the Court and the Cottage, the metropolitan Opera-house and the Village-green. On the green it may be danced as a mere gambol; but to the artist it presents a series of the prettiest vignettes, embodying quite a little romance of joyous successful courtship. You may see in it all the balancing and hesitation; the alternate pursuing and retreating; the wish indicated — trifled with — encouraged; the flame lit — laughed at — fanned — returned; the pretty, coy tactics of feminine *agacerie*; the assiduous ardour of male gallantry; and, last of all, the swift exhilarating whirl, with which the waltz (beginning at the wrong end) undramatically sets out. We would by no means assert that all this succession of feeling is perfectly and definitely expressed in the Polka; nor that choreographic art has not frequently embodied the same story in more significant and, perhaps, more graceful forms: we only maintain that the Polka goes further towards its representation than any of our ordinary ball-room dances; and so far is superior to them. It is a progress which we hope that the young ladies will follow up with spirit, now that they have fairly broken through the glacial frigidity of the worn-out quadrille, and improved on the monotony of the waltz. We should be glad to see a taste for artistic dancing becoming prevalent in society; more life and colour infused into our rather prosaic amusements; and our ball-room crowds (at present a sort of anarchy) grouped and organised in the performance of choregraphic evolutions, having a dramatic interest. In the meantime there is more yet to be made of the Polka. Why should not some innovator, bolder than the rest, raise the question of *dress*? Why should not the eye and the artistic sense be entertained with novel and characteristic costume, as well as diversified and graceful movement? There is no restriction as yet, we believe, on ancles; no

moral veto on red boots. It is certainly absurd to dance the Polka *in a train*; to curtain round the feet under long trailing robes, so that all their newly-learned evolutions, and pretty twinkling steps, are executed unseen in the dark. Nor, again, is there any inherent superiority in the gentlemen's soot-coloured swallow-tails over the picturesque Redowa Tunic. We believe the lady would be rather less *décoltée* than in an ordinary evening-dress; so there can be no objection on that score. And indeed, if it were otherwise, we are not of those who incline to *too* Oriental a concealment of feminine beauty; — which has not, by the way, done much for Oriental morality. We approve of a moderate display of the “bounteous-waving” bosom — God's most beautiful creation. We think that whatever is lovely is pure — if looked at with pure eyes. Indulgent nature has drawn no line along the neck — saying, thus far shalt thou go and no further. The boundaries of pure and impure lie deeper than the surface, and are set up in the heart. Is villanous calico better to behold than woman's graceful neck? — or purer than its sky-grained white, rose-bloomy, shadowed with cool grey? and thou, sweet, flower-haunted dell, ever marking in ebb and flow of outline the alternate tide of the breath, shall thy permitted glimpse be all withdrawn? Away with this pinch-beck purity — these millinery-morals! We refuse the calico-test. We will not pin delicacy on a *fichu*, nor measure virtue by the breadth, of a kerchief, nor cut our modesty to our muslin. Return to your tricks and your adulterations, Oh moral and immaculate Trade! Little Bethel, avoid! Till ye have purified your souls with poetry, and “made your hearts ready with your eyes,” these charms may not be for you. But we, with dreamy eyes, will follow these floating lights and shades, as they dip curiously into each little dell and undulation; dappling hill and plain; sharing every dimple between them; and bringing out, with intelligent touch, all the sweet sinuosities of the form. For we know that the habitual contemplation of whatever is beautiful, softens and improves rough man; purging the grosser particles from his nature; and inclining heart and eye to idealize all sensuous charms.

And if, dear young ladies, our old friend Indignant Virtue, to perplex you, asks for an exact low-water-mark — a pattern to cut her next dress by — send her to us; and we will help you out of the difficulty. We will say to Indignant Virtue, “Tell us how far the bosom will bear inspection *within*, and we will tell you how much muslin may be spared from *without*.” The application of which rule to her case, may possibly fix low-water-mark at a very unexceptionable level — immediately under her chin.

Meanwhile, dear ladies, continue your useful propaganda. Cultivate and diffuse a taste for dancing — not as a mere fashionable show, or casual refuge from ennui — but as an ART, to be practised with enthusiasm and delight. Show it in its intimate connexion with other forms of art; the material type of all the measured harmonies. Show it pure and beautiful in the ball-room; purest and most beautiful on the stage — because carried there to the highest artistic perfection. Nor confine your teaching to Pall Mall; — but carry the

BALLADS AND BROADSIDES.

"A world of tall lads,
That merry ditties troll'd, and ballads."—*Hudibras*.

He who possesses a collection of old ballads and broadsides has only to turn the pages on which they are so neatly and carefully preserved to feel the force of these words—"We live in a world of changes." Snatched from the oblivion or destruction that has been the lot of the other hundreds of copies which once made street and alley resound when made vocal by the leathern-lunged ballad-singers and hawkers,—or, as these worthies politely designated each other and themselves, "itinerant harmonists" and "public orators,"—and which were parted with to the eager lieges for the smallest copper coins, the specimens themselves, now venerably browned with age, bring silver and gold: nor are the lessons that many of them teach dear at the money.

The great alterations in society, whether slow or rapid, are portrayed in their clumsy woodcuts—more dear to the collector than the most exquisite work of Gilbert and Folcard, or Meadows and Linton,—and may be read in their sooty pages. Political intrigues, revolutions, scandal, battle and murder and sudden death, were made public by these vehicles when there was no organised daily press, and when it was well said—"Give me the making of the ballads, and let who will make the laws." And what a motley assemblage do they present! Here, all the coarse but forcible songs with which the mob roared their tumultuous joy at the downfall of the Rump; there, the biting stanzas with which Jacobite and Hanoverian reviled each other in Amœbean lampoons:—love-songs—music and all—once not only tolerated in drawing-rooms, but sung while fair fingers accompanied them on the virginals, spinet, or harpsichord, and which would now be hissed off the stage of a theatre in a suburban fair,—manifestoes—"Helter Skelter, or the Devil upon Two Sticks, in a comical Dialogue between High Church and Low Church, relating to the Times; by the author of *All Men mad*" (which we would recommend to the perusal of the Tractarians and their opponents, but for some rather strong expressions more suited to the year 1737 than the present polished era),—every possible variety of news and gossip,—and, though last not least, judges' charges and dying speeches.

Death is an awful sentence for man to pass on man! Never shall I forget the first time I heard it pronounced. A gipsy, in the very prime of youth and health, with a fine Italian cast of face—one whom Eastlake might have chosen for one of his banditti—was on his trial

for sheep-stealing. His male and female friends of the same race stood immediately below the dock. The trial proceeded; but neither he nor they manifested any emotion till the judge had concluded his summing-up, and the jury had turned round in their box to consider their verdict. Then his eye became restless, wandering from the jury-box to his friends, who now looked up to him as if to assure him, and snatching an orange that one of them offered, he sucked it with nervous eagerness. The conference was short; the jury again faced the court; and the foreman, in answer to the usual question of the clerk of arraigns, replied—"GUILTY."

The aged judge—he had passed his eightieth year—placed the black cap on his palsied head, and the rich warm flush on the cheek of the convict sank into a sickly lemon hue. His intensely black eyes were riveted upon the cold grey orbs and emaciated visage that glared on the judgment-seat; and, as the sentence issued from the pale lips of the judge, his breath seemed to wither the young and vigorous man as if it had been "the icy wind of death." The criminal's lower jaw fell as he gaspingly gazed at that stern old man; and, at the last awful prayer—"May the Lord have mercy on your soul!"—he sprang up and dropped as if he had been shot, and was borne away senseless amid the wild shrieks of his tribe: they ring in my ears now.

Amid all the changes of late years the reformation of our criminal code is one of the most striking; for, although much remains to be done, a great improvement has already been effected. The days are gone by when shoplifters were executed by dozens; and the law-student, as he goes to the early London sittings, no longer sees, looming through the cold fog of a November Monday morning, seven or eight sack-like figures, which once were forgers, suspended high above the brutal crowd before the fatal door in the Old Bailey.

Mark the offences for which the men here named died.

"THE LAST FAREWELL TO THE WORLD

OF THE THREE MALEFACTORS

Who are to be executed on Friday next, at Tyburn, viz.

JOHN KELLY, JAMES SMITH, AND JOHN MERCHANT.

"COME, all ye youths, and warning take,
By our unhappy fall,
Next Friday is the fatal day,
Our lives must pay for all;
Three of us are doom'd to die,
On Tyburn's fatal tree,
Have mercy, Lord, mercy we crave,
Our hopes are fix'd on thee.

"How many have we seen to go
On Tyburn's dreary road,
Yet could not a warning take,
Regardless of our God ;
But now, too late, we wish we'd been
More wise in earlier time,
Alas ! how shocking 'tis to see
Youth cut off thus in prime.

"I, James Smith, unhappy man,
Must now resign my breath,
One Agnes Ellis I did rob,
For which my forfeit's death ;
Out of her dwelling-house I took
Silk handkerchiefs so free,
But I do now lament the act ;
Ye youths, be warn'd by me.

"John Kelly too must share the fate,
And go the Tyburn road,
For I, alas ! did set at nought,
The laws of man and God ;
Which now has brought me to this end,
Alas ! unhappy me !
Too late to shun the horrid fate,
Of Tyburn's gloomy tree.

"One Edward Adams I did rob
Of money very small,
But if he had a larger sum,
I should have ta'en it all ;
One farthing and a sixpence was
The sum I took away,
For which I now must suffer death,
On Friday's awful day.

"John Merchant I must resign my life,
Unhappy is my state,
To die an ignominious death,
How shocking is my fate ;
Robert Radford I did rob
Of money on the highway,
In Kingsland Road I did the fact,
For which my life must pay.

“Ye giddy youth, a warning take,
 By our unhappy end,
 Forsake bad company, shun vice,
 In time your faults amend ;
 On no lewd women cast your eye,
 Let them not tempt your mind,
 Beware of luxury and vice,
 If happiness you'd find.

“Bad company was the sad cause
 Of our first going astray,
 For which we now repent the time,
 Have cause to rue the day ;
 Ye jocund youths, who fondly hope
 For many years in store,
 Live as you wish that you had lived
 When life shall be no more.”

Ryland, who engraved the plates for Hawkins's edition of Walton's “Complete Angler,” appears to have been the last that suffered at Tyburn, and he was executed in August, 1783 ; so that the following broadside, which is headed by a large and intensely black woodcut of a walking funeral procession about to enter a church door, must have been printed after that time.

“THE GROANS OF NEWGATE,

SORROWFUL LAMENTATION, AND LAST FAREWELL TO THE WORLD, OF THE
 UNFORTUNATE MALEFACTORS

Who are to be executed on *Thursday* next, upon a Scaffold erected at the
 Debtors' Door, *Newgate*.

“ALL you who now in pleasures roll,
 And pass your time away,
 Draw near and hear these lines I write,
 Attend to me I pray ;
 They treat of wretched men now doom'd
 To meet a shocking death,
 Lord Jesus Christ receive their souls
 When they resign their breath.

- "I, John Strong, wicked man, must die,
And housebreaking my crime ;
In prayers and penitence I will
Employ my precious time ;
That I may front the fatal tree,
And like a Christian die,
For sinners Christ did shed his blood,
So on him I'll rely.
- "The Kings and Keys, a publick house
In Fleet Street, I did break,
From thence plate and some other things
Feloniously did take.
My sinful comrades in this deed
I hope will warned be,
O shun such ways, which in the end
Must bring you to the tree.
- "I, Charles Martin, alas ! must die,
For robbing on the road,
O Lord, prepare for me, I beg,
In Heaven a blest abode ;
A wife and two small children I
Must leave behind to grieve ;
May God a father prove to them,
And all their wants relieve.
- "Jame Gale, a wicked cruel man,
To the Green Park did go,
There Thomas Hobbes felonious robb'd,
And did no mercy shew ;
A guinea, hat, and silver watch,
From him he then did take,
Short his time is here on earth,
He must atonement make.
- "William Britton, from Mr. Dowse
A chesnut mare he stole,
Christ look down and comfort him,
Have mercy on his soul.
From transportation, George Townsend
Did foolishly return,
Lord forgive his sinful soul,
Lest it in hell should burn.

"Spectators all, both young and old,
Who view this shocking sight,
A warning take by their sad end,
And steer your conduct right ;
Let no dishonest ways be sure
E'er enter in your mind,
Serve God in righteousness and truth,
To virtue be inclin'd.

"So now a long farewell to all,
Dread Newgate's bell doth toll,
Christ look down, and pardon us,
Have mercy on each soul ;
Lord, O now prepare for us
A place in thy abode,
For mercy we now plead to thee,
Thou great, tremendous God."

Not one of the wretched men, whose fate is above recorded in doggerel, would now have expiated his crime with the forfeiture of life. So far well ; but we must be careful that while we avoid one extreme we do not rush into another. At present, unless the state, a public body, or a rich man prosecutes, the chances are many to one in favour of the criminal, who, in cases of embezzlement or robbery, too often is successfully defended by the help of the stolen property. When a murderer *is* by some happy chance convicted, hardly a thought is bestowed on the ruined family of the murdered person, whilst every attention "consistent with his melancholy situation" is lavished upon the "unfortunate man," and the murderer becomes an object of sympathy to sentimental ladies and gentlemen. If he should not obtain a comfortable berth for life, on the ground of his convenient lunacy, or a pardon after his conviction, all around him manifest their friendly anxiety to smooth his path to the gallows ; he shakes hands with the sheriff, thanks him and the governor for all favours, and either hangs like a hero, or quits the world with the air of a martyr.

AUGUST. — A WATER SKETCH.

BY ANDREW WINTER.

HERE, love, towards this islet let us steer,
 Flush in this bay, thick paved with lily leaves,
 The clear white cups our keen keel swirling down ;
 And see ! up the dumb water-beetles dart,
 Then dive again among the swaying stems
 Our boat glides over. Hark ! how fresh the sound,
 As 'twixt the reeds we crash upon the bank :
 Firm footing here this tuft of rushes gives,
 One step and those twin-daisied feet we land
 Upon the swarded green. See, darling ! here,
 Among the weeds, the glist'ning pieces still,
 Of the Venetian glass I broke last spring,
 Toasting "The lady with the Greek-waved hair"
 Till the last bubble burst upon my lip.
 Here I remember on the ground I lay,
 Noting the silver satin's changeeful flush,
 And the long feathers, nodding courtesies,
 Beneath that murm'ring shade of sycamorea,
 Where now the clouds of insects rise and fall,
 Then came a laugh, and then—your deep blue eyes
 And yellow hair of leafy shade grown tired,
 Towards yon tree came out into the sun,
 Down dropp'd the ruffles from your loving arm
 Upstrain'd to switch the chestnut's budding cones,
 Which scatter'd all around their little stars.
 "I wish I had the giraffe's neck," you said,
 To snap that tantalizing upper bud ;
 And then turn'd round as if a friend were nigh
 To where I stood admiring. That curtsey proud !
 Look, love, and see, from out the rustling reeds
 The swan sail past. No Roman galley-beak
 Back-curved disdained the water so—'twas thus,
 You drew up seeing me—'twas all rare art—
 Confess how much ?

See my poor finger now,
How you have bruised it with my opal ring?
Well then, what cared I for the chestnut buds,
They said Sir Owlet there was quizzing them,
And so I volunteered unearthing you,
Hid close among the waving screen of ferns;
'Tis still continual mirth, how suddenly
I froze that pert assured smile of yours.
I've often thought I should have lost you then,
Had not that glorious Weber's waltz struck up,
And swiftly into pity's melting drops
All my hoar-frosted haughty pride dissolved.
Then your revenge!—Up sprang the gladd'ning strings,
Beneath the harper's spirit-stirring hand;
And round you whirl'd me till my hair blew back,
And pants broke up my set rehearsed speech:
I've scarce forgiven you for so cheating me
Into acquaintanceship.

Loop back your shawl,
Let thus your bonnet from the ribands swing
Just as—the music ceased—you wander'd with me
Through the woods. I'd picture o'er again
That scene—remember how polite we were,
Growing botanical o'er every flower,
Then the blue sky, its deep intense admiring,
And the grey shadows on the rounded clouds,
Afraid to say what most we had at heart.
Then the beech wood came,—the tall wood of masts
Branchless and still; what wonder sweet my love
That then we let our golden secret out:
The rest you know.—I've felt so happy now,
Watching the sun-waves' ceaseless flickering
Upon the boat side dance, I've scarce perceived
The tide has left these flags,—we've barely time
To clear the shallows in the upper reach,
And bring our skiff up to her mooring ring
By the old willow shadowing the creek.

THE VIGIL OF BLIND BRIDGET.

A TALE OF WESTCHEAP.

(FROM THE MS. CHRONICLE OF MASTER LAMBARDE.)

A BRIGHT summer's sunset, that rose-tinged the lofty gables of Westcheap, and gilded the pinnaced spires of the neighbouring churches, shone upon a merry crowd, who, in holiday dress, and wearing holiday faces, paced up and down the wide street, and gathered in small parties beneath the overhanging penthouses. A pleasant sight was it; and the wide casements were gay with flowers and fair women, and the porches of each house were decked with green boughs, and lamps in readiness to be lighted when the lingering twilight should come on, and the goodly Conduit, lately beautified at the cost of "the folke of the Mercerie," displayed wreaths of white roses and pennoncel bearing the various devices of the House of York, and the beautiful cross at the end of Wood Street bore on its summit the blue and murrey banner, with the royal arms, surmounted by the white boar.

All around betokened joyance, for it was Midsummer Eve, in the year of Grace 1484; and although Richard the Third was now trembling on his precarious throne, and rumours of change and whispers of coming wars were of daily occurrence, the inhabitants of London, to whom indeed the wars of the Roses had brought less distress and annoyance than to the other parts of the kingdom, seemed prepared fully to enjoy this their last springtide festival, and to celebrate with all fitting honours that most splendid of the London pageants—the procession of the Midsummer Watch.

Through the merry crowd, but scarcely looking around him, a young man, holding the arm of one much older, passed. This older man, as his dress—the long murrey broad cloth gown and the breach-fastened hood of dark blue—proved, was a citizen, and a brother of the Mercers' guild; and it was well for his young companion that he was thus dressed, for the flat velvet cap, with its jewelled band, and the rich tawny damask short gown which was just visible beneath the large travelling cloak, seemed to mark the young man, despite of his light hair and that bright complexion which for so many centuries was considered the national characteristic of the Englishman, as a foreigner, and a foreigner, too, of the class just then most obnoxious to the valorous London 'prentices,—a Genoese or a Lombard. Under the protection of the London mercer the young man however passed safely along, although from time to time the angry glance of some

tall 'prentice, or the muttered remark of some especially patriotic old woman, reminded him of the risk he would have encountered had he passed alone. At length they arrived opposite the Conduit, where the fast-increasing crowd prevented their further progress. "And here, I fear, we must stay until the procession has passed," said the old man, "although right opposite is the house whither you are bound."

"Is yonder the Mercery?" replied the young man, pointing to a row of tall, high-gabelled houses, each adorned with various fanciful devices, but all bearing on an escutcheon just beneath the casement of the first story the bust of "our Ladye, the especial guardian, and therefore the armorial bearing of the guild and fraternity of the Mercers."

"Yes, that is the Mercery," replied his companion; "and the third house, that next to Master Colet's, is my good old friend's, Leonard Wellysbourne's: and there is he in the porch, handing cups of wine in honour of the eve of blessed St. John; and there is his daughter at the window above."

The young man cast a hasty glance on the wealthy mercer, who, tankard in hand, was, with genuine old English *bonhomie*, pouring its contents into a small silver cup, which he courteously handed to the bystanders; but he fixed his eyes as though spell-bound on the window above.

And in truth that window presented a sight well worthy the earnest contemplation of a young man of five-and-twenty. A maiden of dazzling beauty, her rich golden hair parted on the smooth white forehead, and half gathered up beneath the network of gold and pearls at the back of her head, half straying over her rounded shoulders, was standing at the open casement gazing with a pleasant smile at the gay scene before her. Her dress, of blue silk, was fastened in front with rich tassels and ornaments of deep red; for the wives and daughters at this period, as well as the husbands and fathers, wore the "livery" of the company; and for the present year, for the Mercers, these were the appropriated colours of the House of York, deep red and dark blue, or, in the phrase of the fifteen century, "darke watchet and murreye." There she stood, unconscious, probably altogether careless, of the admiration she excited, leaning one fair hand upon the window-sill, while the other was lifted as though to take a flower from the huge nosegay that filled the middle casement.

On came the gathering crowd, on came the gorgeous procession, with trumpet-blast mingling in pleasant contrast with the merry music of the city ways; and all at once the chimes, unrivalled in tone and sweetness, of old London's twenty peal of bells, rung out loud and clear in wild but harmonious melody. Still gazed the young man. The morrice-dancers, with their parti-coloured scarfs and glittering kerchiefs, passed unnoticed; the goodly pageants, St. Peter with his keys, and the mermaidens with flowing locks and golden mirrors; the "henchmen on great stirring horses," as Master Stow quaintly says; the age-hallowed guardians of London, the giants, who on this particular evening always went the round of the city; the

Lord Mayor on his palfrey trapped with crimson velvet down to the ground,—even that most imposing part of the pageant, the two thousand tall yeomen in bright plate-armour, the city watch,—none could win the attention of the young man, or turn his fixed gaze from that open casement.

His friend, however, did not seem to perceive it. The days of romance with worthy Master Fraunceys, even if he had ever known any, had long since passed away. So when the dispersing of the crowd gave opportunity of passing, he hastily seized the young man's arm and led him across.

"Whither are you leading me?" said his still-bewildered companion, when he found himself beneath the doorway of Master Wellysbourne's house, almost ere he was aware he had crossed the way.

"Whither? why to my good friend's," replied Master Fraunceys, beginning to mount the narrow staircase. "Come up, Master Verney; we had need solace ourselves with a cup of wine after our long standing."

The young man mechanically followed his conductor up the narrow stairs to a goodly-sized room, adorned with tapestry and strewn with rushes, but bearing marks in the rich broiery of the cushions, and rich plate that ornamented the cupboard, of the wealth of its owner. Not on these, however, did the young man's eye rest, not on the master, who rose to greet him, but on the lady who sat in the window-seat,—the very damsel on whom his eyes had been fixed while the long procession passed by.

"My good old friend, right glad am I to see you," said the host; "and you too, fair sir. By letters from Antonio Bonvici I learnt we were to expect you. Were you with that right noble merchant or with Luca Contarini?"

"I knew them both well," replied the young man, drawing from his inner vest a letter, square folded, tied with a pink silk cord, the ends of which were fastened with a huge green wax seal, and presenting it; "but it is some time since I left Genoa."

Master Wellysbourne hastily broke the seal and untied the cord, and while he was busily engaged in reading the letter the eyes of the young man again turned to the object that had so strongly attracted his attention.

"My fair sir," said Master Wellysbourne, "I bid you heartily welcome;" and he wrung the hand of the young man. "So you are English born and bred, and, as my old friend here saith, was anxious to return to England."

"Truly I was," replied the young man, musingly; "though, alas! things seem in strange confusion."

"Alas! for the Red Rose," said Master Wellysbourne; "Saints alone know what time may bring forth!"

"Beware, my good friend," said the mercer of Cornhill; "walls have ears; and these are not times to talk aloud, even to ourselves. But away with such thoughts on a holiday evening."

"Aye, away with such thoughts!" echoed Master Wellysbourne: "pour us a cup of Malvoisie, Cecily, and let us drink welcome to our new visitant, Master Reginald Verney."

The fair damsel arose; she filled a tall chased drinking-cup from the large tankard that stood on the table, and just touching the brim with her lips, gracefully presented it to the new guest. Was fair Cecily's hand unsteady, or, absorbed in admiration of her beauty, did the young man forget to take the proffered cup? We cannot say, but it fell from their hands, and the rich Malvoisie was poured on the rushes.

"A woeful omen! Heaven avert it!" said Master Wellysbourne, with extreme agitation. "Saints grant, my fair sir, that your coming hither bring no ill fortune!"

"Saints grant it!" replied the young man, earnestly; but the sudden paleness of his cheek, and the hurried manner in which he snatched the cup from the ground, and replaced it on the table, showed that he was not proof against superstitious fears: and indeed who was, in the fifteenth century? But with a bright evening shining on them, and the merry bells gaily ringing, surrounded by holiday sights and sounds, the luckless omen was soon forgotten. The tall chased drinking-cup was refilled, and drained, to the prosperity of the good city and the worshipful guild of the Mercers; and when the gallant procession returned, with their two thousand cressets waving aloft, Master Fraunceys, with the exultation of the ancient citizen, cried, "Saw ye ever so goodly a sight?"

"Oh no!" was the young man's eager reply, for his gaze was fixed on the beautiful maiden beside him.

The next morning there was much talk in the Mercery, both about the handsome young stranger who had become Master Wellysbourne's guest, and about the omen that had signalised his coming. "He may be handsome, and wealthy, and right worshipful as to family," said blind Bridget, as she sat in the sun, just beside the conduit, twirling her distaff; "but 'tis a woeful chance that he ever came yonder. Alack for poor Master Wellysbourne!"

"But what hath he come for?" said Ralph Crestener, one of the tallest and most belligerent of the mercer's 'prentices,—“more than half a foreigner as he is, with his flat velvet cap, like a popinjay of a Lombard.”

"Nay, he hath come from Genoa," said old Oliver Lincolne, Master Fraunceys' chief man; "to learn our London ways of trade, and he is to sojourn with good Master Wellysbourne; for my own part, methinks he is somebody."

"And why, forsooth, should he be somebody?" retorted Ralph Crestener.

"Because as he came on shore two persons met him, and one, I am sure, was a knight."

"And did he go with them?"

"No, 'twas just as he landed, and I stood by; but they were off ere one could say half an Ave-Mary."

"There is somewhat that should not be," said Master Welles, one of the poor brethren of the Mercers' Company, who just come thither for his weekly dole. "Keep to true Englishmen, my fair boys, and have nought to do with outlandish men, save to fight them; and then ye may come to be mercers of high repute, like Sir Godfrey Bullen and Sir Henry Colet, instead of eating of the alms-basket. But that *ung man* scarcely looks like a foreigner."

"He is English born and bred; so saith my worthy master," replied Oliver Lincolne; "and a fair, well-spoken, open-handed gentleman. I would that sad chance about spilling the wine had not happened. Our sweet Lady forfend aught of ill should come to Master Welllysbourne's beautiful daughter!"

"Had she aught to do with that wine-spilling?" said blind Bridget, suddenly stopping the twirl of her distaff, and fixing her sightless eyes on the serving-man.

"Aye, soothly, good mother! she was handing the cup to him when it fell."

The old woman clasped her hands, regardless of reel or distaff, which rolled away. "Woe worth the day!" said she; "would he had been buried in the sea!"

"Good mother! ye say not so," cried the bystanders,—for blind Bridget was a kind of oracle among them, not merely from her age, and her high religious repute, but because among a marvelling and superstitious people it was believed that the loss of earthly vision had been made up to her by the gift of second sight.

Blind Bridget replied not; she sat violently rocking herself to and fro, murmuring snatches of old rhyme—those quaint old rhymes, half spell, half prayer, which called upon St. Michael and all good angels to shield from coming ill, or supplicated St. Anne, or St. Agnes, or that incomprehensible personage the "White Paternoster," to bring good fortune. Suddenly the old woman stopped, and clasped her hands. "Sweet maiden! Cecily," said she, "darling from thy childhood hast thou been to blind Bridget! and what would I not do for thy welfare? O vain were spell or charm against coming ill! To our Lord's own safe keeping I commend thee!"

"Amen!" involuntarily murmured the bystanders, awe-stricken with the solemnity of the blind woman's words.

"Saints grant she be mistaken!" said Oliver Lincolne, as he turned away; "and yet a true prophet too often hath blind Bridget proved."

Days and weeks passed on. Master Welllysbourne seemed well satisfied with his new guest, nor did Cecily look displeased. Indeed, Reginald Verney seemed in a fair way to gain golden opinions of all, not even excepting the tall 'prentices in the Mercery.

"It is true," said Ralph Crestener, "Master Verney handles silks as though he knew little about them; and only last week sent three pieces of Lyons velvet, instead of Genoa, to Lord Neville; but then you should see him shoot with the long bow; and how he rides.—Our Lady! he sits his horse like a knight. And then when Sir Henry Colet bought his new cast of hawks, ye should have heard Master Verney talk of falconry;—why he knows every point of hawking, just like Sir Tristram or Sir Huon."

"And," interrupted Miles Forster, "when we set up the cry of 'a Red Rose' in Finsbury Field, ye should have seen how Master Verney looked. 'It is blighted now,' said he, 'but when next summer comes the Red Rose will blossom again.'"

"Ay, 't will blossom again!" shouted the 'prentices.

"Have ye a mind to be taken before the Lord Mayor, and punished on bread and water?" said a stern voice.

The 'prentices turned, and beheld Sir Godfrey Bullen, the master

of the Company, and they uncapped with rueful looks; for bread and water suited ill with the tastes and habits of the valorous old London apprentices.

"These are woeful times," said Sir Godfrey. "I exhort you to the utmost caution, for the King returneth to London shortly; so beware of idle speeches or idle rhymes, — ye see what they have cost to many."

The 'prentices bowed in silence, for the recollection of the severe executions which had marked the short and turbulent reign of the White Boar of York arose to their minds; and when Sir Godfrey Bullen, lifting his hood, fervently ejaculated, "Heaven be merciful to our good city!" even the most light-hearted among them looked grave.

Months passed on; it was now winter, and still Reginald Verney remained the guest of Master Wellysbourne, and the companion and earnest admirer, too, of his beautiful daughter. But although the wintry sun shone with ineffectual warmth and brightness, blind Bridget still took her seat, distaff in hand, on the side of the conduit that looked towards Master Wellysbourne's house; nor, though many a kind neighbour offered her a seat by the blazing kitchen fire, would she relinquish her post, — not even when Cecily, with her sweetest voice, urged the old woman to come in, and with her own hands placed the joint stool beside the kitchen fire, would she accept the kindness. "Let me sit in the sunshine," said she, and she re-seated herself in her old accustomed place.

"Good mother, take heed; this cold east wind suiteth not fourscore years," said Oliver Lincoln, who had brought the water-tankards to refill them at the conduit.

"My cloak is right warm, thanks to my lady prioress of Halliwell," replied the old woman; "but, good Oliver, I have made a solemn vow to watch over her." And she pointed emphatically to the opposite casement.

The old serving-man did not smile at the blind and feeble old woman seeking to keep watch over the young and active maiden. The dark omen recurred to his mind. "Heaven grant you success!" said he, and he left blind Bridget twirling her distaff, but with ear attentive to the very lightest sound.

Meanwhile whispers of change of dynasty, and rumours of conspiracies formed by the exiled English nobles, disturbed not only the peace of the monarch, but filled London with anxiety and distrust. That a formidable league for placing the young Earl of Richmond on the throne had been formed in France, and that emissaries from thence, well fitted by talents and station for their dangerous mission, had been sent over, were facts which could no longer be doubted. But when the citizens read the King's proclamation, commanding them to aid in discovering these emissaries, "and them ye so find ye do commit unto sure ward, and after proceed to their sharp punishment, in example and fear of all other," they crossed themselves, and looked around in dismay; for well did they know that no quarter would be given to the suspected partisans of the Red Rose. And ere long their worst suspicions were verified in the execution of Sir *Robert Clifford* and others, and in the heavy loans and benevolences

which Richard exacted from the wealthier inhabitants of London ; and therefore, while he kept Christmas at Westminster with hitherto unequalled splendour, gloom and sadness took place in the City of the feastings and rejoicings which formerly marked that holy tide.

Alas for Master Wellysbourne ! the mercers, as the wealthiest traders, (for at this period they were Italian merchants), had been singled out for especial exaction, and he, as a suspected Lancastrian, had been heavily mulcted. This, although he was by no means so wealthy as his brethren, Master Wellysbourne might have lightly passed over, but his utmost anxiety was now excited respecting Reginald Verney. During the last three weeks he had become strangely altered. He was gloomy and absent, and much did the wealthy mercer fear that he had some most disreputable associates, — nay, even that he was not the honourable young man recommended to his notice by the two chief merchants of Genoa, but some unknown adventurer.

"Look at this letter," said Master Wellysbourne, placing it in Master Fraunceys' hands. "Martin Jumbarde, of Nantes, saith he knoweth nought of him, — that he never even heard his name."

"This seemeth strange, my old friend," said the mercer of Cornhill. "But still, is there not some mistake ? Luca Contarini knows him."

"True, but he was only a short time at Genoa, whereas the letter he brought from Martin Jumbarde, of Nantes, spoke of his family, and of having known him from childhood."

"It did, but yet there may be some mistake."

"Would it were so, — but he is out of late, even until long after curfew time, and but yestereven I met him just down by Foster Lane, when he started, and crossed the way as though fearful to be seen. Alas ! sad times are these, and many evil-disposed persons are abroad."

"But, good Master Wellysbourne, hath he not always conducted himself like an honourable young man ?"

"Saints know he hath ! but I have sad fears about him. Alas ! might not that omen have been sent as a warning ?"

"It was," said a low voice.

Master Wellysbourne turned. It was blind Bridget, and she rested her hand on the mercer's arm. "Go forthwith to the sanctuary of St. Martin's," said she. "I have watched long and late, for your sweet daughter's welfare, so go to St. Martin's sanctuary, inquire for Piers Carvenel, and you will find *him* there."

"Good Bridget !" cried the astonished merchant ; "Reginald Verney at St. Martin's sanctuary !" Well might he marvel. The young man, who for more than six months had been the inmate of his house, the companion of his hearth, to be the visitant of that especial place of resort of more than half the thieves and profligates of London !

"It cannot be !" said Master Fraunceys ; "Good Bridget ! ye are mistaken."

"Let those who have eyes be mistaken," said the old woman sternly, "not those who can hear the lowest whisper, and distinguish the lightest footfall. Heard I not his promise, beside yonder Cross, last night, that he would be at the sanctuary of St. Martin's by even-song-bell ; and hath not that just rung out ? Go thither, good Master Wel-

Wellysbourne, watch withoutside. Woe worth the day *he* ever came within your doors!"

"It is true, indeed! Would that we had never seen him!" said Master Wellysbourne, returning, and sorrowfully entering that best room, where so many pleasant evenings he had sat with his young companion.

"Who might have thought it!" said the mercer of Cornhill; "though, alas! we need wonder at nought in these times. But what must be done?"

"I will send him away forthwith; but, alas! for my poor Cecily; — little did either of us expect this sad trial. But he shall go, and ere to-morrow's light."

The hours flew on, but Reginald Verney returned not; and at length the mercer of Cornhill bade his friend good night, and Master Wellysbourne retired to his sleepless bed. The morning came, the day drew on, still the young man had not returned. "Impossible!" said Cecily, as she listened to her father's story. "Oh! some harm hath chanced to him, or he would have been here ere now."

Sorrowfully the day passed on; it was now twilight, and Cecily sat alone, leaning her head against the casement, revolving in her mind the strange story her father had just told her, and half inclined to believe that he was labouring under some delusion, so unlikely did it appear, when a well-known step was heard on the stair, and Reginald Verney entered. He looked pale and weary. "Dear Cecily!" said he, "I have come to bid you farewell."

Cecily looked up with surprise. "Be not cast down at what my father saith, for surely you can explain all. Wait, and his anger will pass over."

"What mean you, dear Cecily? I have not seen your father yet. But I must away to-night,—Heaven knows for how long; and I could not leave England without once again seeing you, and bidding farewell."

"But you are pale, and ill. Whither are you going? — and must you go to-night?"

"I must. Saints grant I may return in spring. But, alas! I knew not until yestereven that I should leave you."

"But wherefore is my father so angered at you? — and wherefore went you to St. Martin's sanctuary?"

"Yes, wherefore went you to St. Martin's sanctuary, Piers Carvel," said Master Wellysbourne, who now entered.

The young man turned wildly round. "How knew you *that* name?" said he.

"Wherefore did Reginald Verney take it?" replied the angry mercer. "Nay, no reply — away. Heaven knows how far I have been from suspecting you; but the companion of the dicers and brawlers of yonder sanctuary shall never remain another night beneath my roof."

"Good Master Wellysbourne, ye cruelly suspect me; and yet, alas! I dare not vindicate myself," said the young man, sadly. "But, dear Cecily, do not *you* believe ill of me."

"Away!" said the mercer, sternly. "You have eaten at my board, and drank of my cup, so I may not deliver you to justice; but never shall Reginald Verney again enter my house."

"Dear father! say not so: he will explain all," cried Cecily.

"Not now,—I dare not. But, good Master Wellysbourne, let me not leave you in anger when I go on a perilous service, from whence I may never return." The young man turned sadly round; he bent forward, and endeavoured to take the hand of the angry mercer, who had flung himself into his huge tapestried chair, when a sealed packet fell from his breast, which, ere he was aware, was picked up by Cecily.

"Oh, give it me back! I have sworn—sworn on the holy gospels, that no eye should ever see it save *he*," cried Reginald Verney, eagerly snatching it from the astonished Cecily, but not before she had glanced at the superscription.

"Saints speed your errand," whispered she; "but oh! is there not great peril?"

"There is, dear Cecily! but I have sworn to fulfil it. Farewell, farewell!"

Days and weeks passed away; spring came on, with its rumours of wars and risings, and with its omens more dreaded still—the streamers that took the form of swords and lances; the mimic sun that appeared in the west; and, more fearful than all, the great eclipse, which by a strange coincidence happened the self-same day on which the queen died. It was a mild spring-tide evening, and blind Bridget, who had been long kept at home by sickness, once more came forth to enjoy the fresh air, and to resume her old accustomed seat beside the conduit.

"Woeful times, good mother!" said Oliver Lincolne. "Ye heard of the fearful sights that have been seen—and truly they came not without cause; for heard ye ever of the mulcts, and fines, and searchings of honest men's houses, that we now have every day. And woeful times are these for good Master Wellysbourne. His house hath twice been searched, though for what the Saints alone know."

"Perchance because years ago he held with the Red Rose," said Ralph Crestener. "But truly, in my mind, these things are but just judgments upon him for turning that poor gentleman so cruelly out of doors."

"Aye, a poor gentleman ye say. Soothly ye will have it that he is some great one in disguise," said Miss Foster.

"I will alway, for an' he be not a noble gentleman in disguise, I never saw one. And look at the proclamation out against Piers Carvenel,—a vile scatterling of a sanctuary man, as Master Wellysbourne called him. Why, two hundred marks to whoever may bring him dead or alive is a greater guerdon, methinks, than is given for such as they."

"Piers Carvenel?" said blind Bridget, half rising from her seat, and laying her hand on the arm of the apprentice. "Piers Carvenel? What say you of him?"

"That a proclamation hath just been stuck on the cross yonder, calling him a traitor, and saying that he came over here to stir up revolt against the king, and to aid the Earl of Richmond."

"The very same!" cried blind Bridget: "and I believed him to be

a mere sanctuary thief and robber. Woe worth the night that ever I kept watch beside the cross at Westcheap!"

Like most of the lower classes in London, blind Bridget was a vehement partisan of the Red Rose. The meek virtues of the gentle Henry the Sixth, and the daring character of the devoted Margaret, had much in them to command popular feeling. That in her determination to watch over the interests of the beautiful mercer's daughter, she should not only have brought such severe sorrow upon her, but perhaps dealt a fatal blow to the cause of the Red Rose, now came like an overwhelming stroke on the poor blind woman; and wringing her hands, and denouncing every evil against herself for her luckless mistake, she sat, refusing to receive the rude, but heartfelt consolations which the bystanders sought to offer her.

"But ye did it for the best, good mother!" said Oliver Lincolne, who from his age seemed best fitted to offer consolation to the mourner of fourscore. "And although the cheek of yonder fair maiden be not so blooming as of yore, still who may tell but times may change, and Master Verney come back safe again?"

"Heaven grant it!" cried blind Bridget, with upraised hands. "But oh! sweet Cecily, that I, who would have gone through fire and water to serve you, should have brought you this sore trial!"

"Now go home, good mother, and be comforted," said the bystanders; "all may yet be well."

"Not to-night, not to-night, will I go home;—no, I will keep vigil at yonder cross, so help me Saints! for the times are dark and dangerous."

The old woman feebly arose, and as she bent her slow footsteps toward the beautiful cross of Westcheap many an eye followed her with reverential feeling. "Sweet lady! grant she may ask that the Red Rose lift its head again!" said Ralph Crestener.

"Doubt not but she will," said Oliver Lincolne. "Aye! we shall soon see what will follow that holy woman's prayers at such a time as this."

At the feet of the beautiful cross of Westcheap, on the well-worn stone steps, did blind Bridget kneel. The night passed on, the midnight bells tolled, the watch, as they marched by, looked with awe-stricken wonder at that dark kneeling figure; but the cold fresh breath of the morning blew keenly, and the bells rung out for "prime," ere, faint and exhausted, blind Bridget arose, and sought her home.

From that time, each day did the old woman take her accustomed seat by the conduit, twirling her distaff, as of yore, nor did she avert her face from fair Cecily when in those sweet low tones she inquired after her welfare. "Keep up your heart, sweet ladybird!" said blind Bridget; "all will yet be well."

It was early in August. "Oh! all will yet be well," said Cecily to herself, as she read and re-read a billet which, fastened to a small cross-bow bolt, had been shot with unerring aim in at the open casement of her chamber. There was no signature, there were but few words, and these prayed her to meet the writer, who dared not enter the city, beside the well of St. Agnes-le-Clere that evening, just before com-

plin. "I will go," said she; "but all good angels be my guides!" and she looked up to the lowering sky not without fear.

How can we describe the path taken by Cecily Wellysbourne to the reader of the nineteenth century? The postern-gate, the massive city wall, the wide ditch,—all have long, long since passed away. And when beyond the city boundary she proceeded along the green meadows—those pleasant fields into which the fathers of the city used "to walke forthe, there to rejoyce their spirits with the beauty and savor of sweete flowers," and where the archery games were held, we are describing a site which for more than a century has been usurped by bricks and mortar.

But beautiful was the scene in the fifteenth century; and most beautiful the clear sparkling well that gushed from the mossy stones, and leaped into the age-worn basin; and rich and thick-clustering were the trees that shaded it, and soft as velvet the bank beside it. No wonder that the well of St. Angles-le-Clere was a favourite trysting place of the London maidens.

Wrapped in her large mantle, and drawing the hood over her face lest she should attract notice of the few citizens who on this dull evening did not forego their accustomed walk, Cecily held on to the well-remembered trysting-place, where many a bright summer's evening she had sat with Reginald Verney, and with beating heart looked anxiously around. But how was this? there was no one awaiting her coming. Vainly and long did she pace the margin of the well, vainly looked to the right and the left; he came not. How could it be? and then thoughts of the risk he ran crowded upon her mind: perchance he had been made a prisoner, and was now awaiting death!

Long she sat. The distant curfews rang out, the lowering sky became darker, and the white curling mist now slowly arose from the distant marshes. Cecily looked anxiously round; the mists were increasing; and even the towers of Halliwell priory, not more than a bow-shot off, were lost to her sight. "Holy Saints, protect me!" she cried, dropping on her knees.

There were approaching footsteps, and a hand was laid on her head, and a mild voice said, "My daughter, what wait you for here?"

Cecily looked up: there was an aged ecclesiastic bending over her, with a kindly smile. "Holy father, is *he* safe?" cried she, scarcely knowing what she said. "He is, my daughter; but the strife is begun, and he hath gone to join it. All now must aid for the Red Rose. Wilt thou, my daughter?"

"Right willingly, holy father! but how can a maiden like me aid ye? Alas! look at the mists around us. Blessed Saints! how may I reach my home!"

The mists had indeed become so thick that scarcely could an object beyond the well be discerned; and the way to the city lay along wide unenclosed fields, intersected by numerous footpaths leading in every direction.

Scarcely less alarmed than the timid maiden, the priest looked anxiously around. "Alas! my daughter, who shall guide us through this darkness? and yet, upon these papers reaching London to-night depends the success of the Red Rose. Reginald Verney was to have taken charge of them, but he hath been sent northward. Another

promised to meet me here at curfew, but he hath not come. Holy Saints! that we had but a guide; though, alas! *who* could guide us through this thick darkness!"

"Fear not, holy father!" said a voice close beside. "Heaven hath sent ye aid, and aid where ye least would look for it. And fear not, my sweet maiden; she who vowed unceasingly to watch over you hath come hither on purpose to seek you."

Well did Cecily know that voice. "Oh, Bridget, good mother! you here, how came ye?"

"Aye! dearest maiden, as I sat beside the conduit, and the bells rang out even-song, methought they said, 'Go forth and seek her,' 'go forth and seek her.' Oh, who should I seek save her I had vowed to watch over? So I arose and asked after ye, and heard ye had gone forth through the postern gate; and as I passed, again the bells chimed forth, 'Onward, right onward!'"

"And you came hither, good mother! and yet you are old and feeble, and blind," said the ecclesiastic.

"Old, truly, good Dr. Morton; but not feeble when the Red Rose needeth aid, nor when my fair Cecily needeth guidance."

"Good Bridget, what say you? How learnt ye my name?"

"Holy father! what disguise can shroud you from the blind? But onward, I pray ye, and fear not. Well do I know every step between Moorgate and this blessed well, whither, when a little child, I was brought to pray that its waters might restore me my sight. But I needed it not; so come on, and fear not: the thickest darkness and the brightest noon are alike to me."

Onward went the aged blind woman, walking fearlessly, staff in hand, while the two followed with uncertain footsteps. Onward, onward, with a vigour beyond her years, and scarcely swerving a hand's breadth from the right path, did blind Bridget guide them through the thick darkness—the feeble leading the strong, the clear-sighted guided by the sightless,—until the three stood safe beneath the shelter of the postern gate.

"And now my guerdon, holy father!" said blind Bridget. "Seek not to enter the city, but lodge at St. Mary Bethlehem, over there, to-night. So give me the papers, and, above all, the brave Red Rose chaplet ye have borne so carefully. It shall hang on the cross of Westcheap ere to-morrow's dawn. Holy father! give me this, and your blessing." The old blind woman knelt humbly down to receive her guerdon and the bishop's blessing. "My prayers are answered," said she, as she arose. "I have rescued my sweet Cecily; and the Red Rose will lift up its head again."

The next morning a marvelling crowd was gathered round the cross at Westcheap. The proclamation of the Earl of Richmond, with the large hanging seal, in right royal fashion, was placed there, surmounted by a chaplet of red roses, but by whose hands no one could tell. And a story was told of a mysterious visitant, who, in the depth of midnight, had entered the very chamber of the Countess of Richmond at Derby House, bringing joyful tidings from her darling son. Great was the marvelling: for what mere mortal could have done *ought during that thick darkness?* So as the Countess was very

devout, and the cause of the Red Rose was very popular, the good citizens determined to give "our Ladye" herself the whole credit of these wonders.

And much talk was there in the Mercery, as rightly there should be, for "our Ladye" was the especial patroness of the folk of the Mercery; and they justly thought, as she had declared in favour of the Red Rose, they could do no better than follow her example. Forthwith each valorous 'prentice mounted a red rose in his cap; the other city 'prentices thought they could not do better than follow the example set by the first city company: so when the news of the victory at Bosworth arrived, there was nought to be done in the good city of London save to light bonfires in the streets, and ring all the bells right merrily.

But there was yet something to be done in guerdon for those who had jeopardied their lives for the Red Rose; so down came the king's uncle, the Earl of Pembroke, in great state to the Mercery, with Reginald Verney riding by his side.

"My good Master Wellysbourne," said the earl to the greatly-astonished mercer, "you swore that Reginald Verney should never again enter your house. You did rightly; but I pray you permit this young man to enter and pay his service to the fair Cecily, for he is Sir Henry Poynings, my most faithful esquire, and one who ye well know hath suffered much ill-will for our cause."

"Ye will not break your vow if you do," said Sir Henry Poynings, grasping his old friend's hand.

"No, no," cried the delighted mercer. "Cecily, come and bid Master Verney welcome."

"Nay, remember your vow. Moreover Reginald Verney is no longer in being now the Red Rose blooms again."

"Ye see I was right," said Ralph Crestener. "Yonder noble knight was a true gentleman; and heartily may we give Master Wellysbourne joy of his son-in-law. But what think you? Blind Bridget hath been taken by the Bishop of Ely himself to the Countess of Richmond, and she hath settled on her twenty marks yearly, and a gown and mantle each Pentecost. Aye, 'twas to her vigil at yonder cross, methinks, we owe all this good fortune."

Many happy years did Sir Henry Poynings and Dame Cecily live; and in the year of Grace 1489 they caused the well of St. Agnes-le-Clere to be repaired and beautified, and they also gave fifty marks toward the new conduit. And often did blind Bridget visit them, and also that honourable lady the king's mother, who called her her bedeswoman, and who greatly delighted to hear her tell this story. And Dr. Bartram, the Lady Margaret of Richmond's confessor, was much struck with it, so he noted it down in his book, — the great book bound in white vellum with brass bosses, which after the suppression of the monastery of Shene, where as prior he spent his last days, fell into the hands of Master Lambarde, the great antiquary; and so pleased was that right learned man also with this story of blind Bridget, that he made diligent inquiry in the Mercery about it, and copied it out, with the additions which he had made, into his own great book of collections, now in Sion College. — H. L.

A TRIP IN THE BAY OF BISCAY.

"*ADELANTE señores!* Forwards, gentlemen," cried the captain of the Spanish *Trincadore*, as we stood staring at the vessel in a way that plainly asked where we were to be stowed, for between poultry, passengers, peasants, and vegetables, all crowded together in an open lugger some thirty feet long, it was difficult to guess where three additional persons were to find room. Luckily, the captain seemed to see no difficulty in the matter, and at his sign to move on, we strode without ceremony over heads and baskets till we reached the stern, where the better part of the passengers were assembled. I call them the better part, but, taken at the best, they were a motley crew. Spanish and French officers, Englishmen serving in the Legion, merchants, a few ladies and one or two children, made up the party, to which, I could see by their looks, we were considered a very unnecessary addition.

I had been persuaded by my two friends, who were returning from an excursion in the Pyrenees, to accompany them to St. Sebastian. Although the Spanish generals, aided by the English under Evans, had succeeded in driving the Carlists from the principal towns in Biscay, they still held the country, and were so active in robbing mails, harassing travellers, and plundering all that came in their way, that, feeling no inclination to commence our feats of arms against such well-practised opponents, we had resolved to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the packet-boat, which ran once or twice a week between Socoa and St. Sebastian.

We were in the month of September, and had started early from our dirtiest of inns at St. Jean-de-Luz to proceed to the point of embarkation; but the heat of a southern sun soon forced us to relax the rapid pace at which we had set off, and we dragged ourselves indolently along till, on arriving at a spot from whence we could see the boat, we had the vexation to perceive that it was on the point of starting. It was now necessary to make up for our past laziness by the most strenuous exertions of legs and voices; and we put so much zeal into the service that the captain had been induced to wait till, fairly exhausted, we arrived at the water's edge.

The inconstancy of the sea is proverbial, but in the Bay of Biscay its caprices are unbounded. We were not above three miles from the shore when the wind, which had been favourable, suddenly changed, blowing with that peculiar whistle which even an inexperienced sailor knows for the forerunner of bad weather. The bright face of the sun became obscured, large drops of rain began to fall, and it was evident that the vessel was making but little way under the impulse of the long sweeps which now supplied the place of sails. The ladies drew their shawls around them, and looked serious. I heard a few half-uttered predictions that it would "soon be over;" but, far from intending to let us off so easily, the squall, having cunningly waited till

we were fairly out at sea, now threw off all disguise, and blew wind and spouted rain till the very seamen looked at each other with lengthened faces.

About this time such of the passengers as were not what is called "good sailors" became greatly inconvenienced by the motion of the boat; and while I was watching with some amusement the prompt politeness with which those who had secured seats at the sides relinquished them to these interesting sufferers, my attention was attracted by a strange hubbub among the steerage passengers, which soon assumed the form of a violent dispute. It seemed contagious; for a Spanish colonel and one or two of the ladies began with great animation to take part in it. It was some minutes before my imperfect knowledge of their language enabled me to comprehend that the subject of quarrel was the danger of continuing our course in the teeth of a wind every moment increasing in violence. The captain and a part of the crew maintained that we might safely proceed, while others urged our putting back to Fontarabia, a town which we had passed some half hour before. The discussion became pretty general, and the disputants supported their various opinions with an earnestness that showed the lively interest they felt in the matter. The Spaniards, without an exception, clamoured to return. The English took different sides; while the Frenchmen, interfering little in the dispute, seemed content to be lost or saved, as the others should decide. But this indifference was by no means shared by one of their countrymen — a merchant from Bordeaux. He was a short, sturdy-looking man, about fifty years of age, rather weather-beaten, but with a good, healthy colour. Like myself, he understood little Spanish; and it was some time before he made out that we were considered in danger; but, once enlightened on the subject, the effect was magical: the idea of putting back took possession of his brain, and he clung to it as his only chance of safety. "Put back the boat!" he exclaimed.

"Be calm, sir," said one of his countrymen; "there is no danger."

"There is danger," he returned. "I had a presentiment of it before I set off on this cursed journey. My wife dreamed I was killed. To *Fontarâbia*! To *Fontarâbia*!" he shouted with the full force of his lungs, at the same time knocking his thick stick against the bottom of the boat. There was no denying that matters began to look serious. The storm raged violently. Even the captain gave up all hope of reaching St. Sebastian, and only argued against the folly of putting back, offering to land us at Passages, a port lying halfway between us and the former place. His proposal met with little favour from the ladies, who mingled their cries to the Virgin for aid with angry denunciations of his obstinacy; and the Spanish colonel, finding it impossible to bring all the world to his opinion, raved and tore his hair like a madman. While this was going on, I found, to my surprise, that two of the Englishmen had got up a little war of their own. One of them, who had his wife on board, insisted on returning, which the other opposed with such pertinacity, that, becoming irritated, they started to their feet, and being too far off to collar each other, I every moment expected to hear a challenge given. But

above all this clamour — above the raging of the storm and the shrieks of the women, the single word "*Fontarââbia!*" shouted at the highest pitch of the Frenchman's voice, was distinctly heard. "The thundering blows which he deals," says Rebecca, speaking of the Black Knight, "you may hear them above all the din of the battle;" and, in like manner, the frantic cry of the unhappy Frenchman, distracted with fear, rose above the roar of contending elements, and the curses of angry men. It was impossible to look at him without a feeling of pity. His complexion, which, under the influence of terror, had early taken a sallow tinge, now faded to a ghastly whiteness. His condition might have moved the hardest heart; but, instead of so doing, it only drew on him the wrath of H—— (the married Englishman), who, having worked himself into a furious passion in his quarrel with his countryman, now turned his rage on the Frenchman, for daring to frighten his wife. "Sir," said he, raising one hand threateningly towards him, while with the other he supported himself by the mast, to which he had clung through his former dispute — "Sir, there are women and children here; fear is as catching as fire; and, if you do not stop these outcries, I will throw you overboard."

Recalled to himself by a new danger, the poor devil begged pardon and promised silence, but in another moment, his fears overmastering his reason, the knocking and shouting recommenced with greater vigour than ever. Fortunately the scene of contention was just then brought to an end by means of the Colonel, who for the last ten minutes had been vainly endeavouring to make himself heard. Staggering to his feet, and drawing his sword, he bade the captain proceed at his peril. This last argument proved so convincing that without another word the vessel was put back, every body, I believe, heartily glad of it, except two or three of the Englishmen, who vented their contempt for what they called the colonel's cowardice in expressions that it was perhaps fortunate for all parties that he did not understand. And now, the wind which had hitherto shown itself such a bitter enemy, proved our best friend, though a rough one, and we speedily made the shore.

The minds of all beginning to calm, he remembered his violence to the French merchant, and feeling rather ashamed of himself made an apology for his warmth. The other received it with the good humour characteristic of his nation, and thinking probably, in his turn, that his pusillanimity required some excuse, he hastened to make the best in his power.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I cannot deny it, *I was afraid*, and yet, gentlemen, in me you see a man who has made fourteen campaigns — *mais que voulez vous*," he continued, raising his shoulders and turning the open palms of his hands outwards, "*Jé n'aime pas la mer — ce n'est pas mon genre de mort*." Whatever might have been the general opinion of this excuse one of his fellow-countrymen treated it as perfectly satisfactory.

"Yes, yes! to be sure," he answered, "a very natural feeling on your part."

"It is lucky for us all," said an Italian, with a sly glance at the

Frenchman, who had just spoken, "that your presentiment came to nothing; I do not think I should have entered the boat, if I had heard beforehand that there was a doomed man on board."

The old merchant looked rather grave at this remark, which the other perceiving, changed the conversation to his own affairs. He informed us that he was a political refugee from Milan, and now belonged to the French Legion; that his regiment had lately been driven out of Pampeluna by an insurrection of the people, and that he and his friend were on their way to some place, the name of which I forget. Indeed I paid little attention to the story, and only remember that by the time the boat touched the shore they seemed to have struck up a close friendship with the Bordeaux merchant.

We landed in a sorry plight, and I believe it rather added to our vexation that the rain ceased and the sun after a few struggles began to show its face again. But repining was of no use, so we shook the wet from our clothes and set off for the town of Fontarabia in a procession somewhat resembling one of those trains of captives recently freed from slavery so well described in *Don Quixote*. The town itself was certainly well calculated to keep up the illusion, so unmistakably Spanish was it in its character.

As we wound up the steep ascent, and passed under the ruined gateway, each person felt he was entering a country differing from all others, and amidst the universal ruin and decay that surrounded us, among buildings tottering from age, or shattered by balls, the signs of a tasteful imaginative people everywhere met the eye.

The principal street was long and narrow, rising higher at every foot, till the foundations of the farthest houses appeared on a level with the roofs of those where we stood; and the battlements of the majestic castle that crowned the whole rivalled in height the lofty mountains around. Among other novelties, my attention was particularly attracted by the strange varieties of the many balconies with which each house was decorated. Of some the forms were rounded, of others square. Here a narrow window, opening at one side, had its delicate balustrade before it, as if constructed for the sole purpose of holding a short conversation with an unsuspected friend below; and there again the larger balcony, carefully covered in, seemed the precaution of jealousy, fearful lest when beauty tasted the air, "love should ride the gale."

In complete keeping with these romantic notions were the costumes and countenances of the loungers in the street, who gazed at us with large searching eyes that seemed to read our inmost thoughts. However fascinated by all we saw, it was impossible to be long unmindful of our uncomfortable condition, and we would fain have sought some place where rest and refreshment might be obtained. But one glance at what we were told was the only inn in the town gave strong assurance that neither was to be had there. From the uppermost story of a high house, black with time and neglect, some squalid-looking people hung lazily out at a wide opening that courtesy might call a window, and surveyed us with that supreme indifference characteristic of the Spanish innkeeper. Glass there was none, nor frames for glass; indeed, the whole building looked as if it had been

guttred by fire. To liken it to one of the houses in Hogarth's print of Gin Lane would be absurd, the immeasurable superiority of civilisation shown by the broken remains of glass in the window frames of the latter, placing it beyond all possibility of comparison. This was the only *fonda* possessed by the town of Fontarabia.

Luckily for us, an English officer stationed there, hearing of our dilemma, offered the use of his house, while some of the party started to seek horses, and apply to the governor of the city for an escort to protect us on our perilous journey over the mountains. They soon returned, followed by peasants leading eight or ten horses with enormous wooden saddles. A question now arose as to what was to be done with our luggage. To carry it with us was impossible, and we agreed to leave it with the captain of the boat on his promise to deliver it next day at St. Sebastian. The only person objecting to this arrangement was the French merchant, who obstinately refused to part with his portmanteau.

After a great deal of debating he engaged one of the horses, and with the assistance of his two friends, proceeded to place his trunk on the animal's back.

"*Sacré!*" exclaimed the Italian as he nearly let it fall, "how heavy it is, I should not like to be the horse that is to carry that burthen. You are a lucky man, Monsieur, if the value of what it contains answers to its weight."

I saw the old man cast a hurried glance around, as he made him a sign to be silent. No more was said on the subject, and both master and trunk were placed in safety on the horse.

We commenced our pilgrimage, the cavalcade headed by our old friend the Colonel, followed by one or two of the ladies *seated astride*, and as many of the gentlemen as could find horses. A large party on foot came next, and the old merchant, with his fellow-countryman and the Italian, brought up the rear.

Our way, though rugged and steep, led us past many scattered cottages, and through numbers of luxuriant orchards and tufts of trees; indeed, the whole side of the mountain seemed decked with them, but the lofty summit once reached, a wilder and more magnificent scene met our view. We had toiled on in the hope that the fatigues of ascending were now at an end; but, on arriving at this point, we saw mountain after mountain rising before us, the road winding and ever mounting among them till lost in the distance. Beneath us the sea, not yet stilled from its past turbulence, dashed its billows at the foot of a slope so steep and unbroken, that one false step on our narrow path might have sent horse and man rolling down a descent of three or four hundred feet. No vestige of human habitation was to be seen; even the cities in the plain were hidden from us as we surmounted the large stones and fragments of rock that obstructed our way. At length we came to a vast defile encumbered with loose masses of rock of such magnitude as to suggest, to a fanciful imagination, the idea that here might be the place from whence, with their ponderous missiles, the Titans essayed to storm Heaven. One huge cluster rising perpendicularly from the side of the mountain, tempted me with the promise of an extensive view of

the country ; and, quitting my companions, I climbed its summit. After gazing for some time at a succession of crags and precipices, which, from an immense height went shelving down to the sea, I watched the progress of our little band. The fatigues of the march had so completely separated it, that those in front were at least half a mile distant from the stragglers in the rear. "A favourable moment for the Carlists to attack us," thought I, "and here am I lingering like a fool, almost out of sight and hearing. The blast of a horn 'on Fontarabian echoes borne' saluting my ears just now would be no small trial to my nerves. The Carlists are not very delicate in their manner of slaughtering prisoners. If they were to take it into their heads to hang me like a dog, or nail me up for a living target, I suspect, that like my old friend in the boat, I should begin to protest that it was not *mon genre de mort*."

Finishing my soliloquy, I was descending with all possible speed when I was startled by a cry so loud and shrill that it hardly seemed that of a human voice. I looked around, but saw no creature from which it could have proceeded. It was repeated several times, and though distant, I faintly distinguished the words "*au secours !*" Without farther hesitation, I ran in the direction from whence it came, till a turn in the path enabled me to see a man on horseback defending himself against two others, one of whom with a thick stick struck him repeated blows on the head. What was my astonishment to recognise in the three, the old merchant and his two treacherous friends. In vain I shouted and ran ; they neither saw nor heard me, and proceeding with difficulty along the rugged path, I at last stopped short—a pause of breathless horror, for I perceived the terrified horse rearing and backing, and every instant approaching nearer to the edge of a precipice. Another moment, and with a shriek that long haunted my dreams, the animal and his rider were dashed over the cliff.

I rushed on, raising shout upon shout to attract the notice of my companions, and at length managed to make myself heard. The alarm once given we collected together, deliberating on what was to be done. Although with little hope of rendering effectual assistance to our unfortunate fellow traveller, a party was despatched to the spot where he was supposed to have fallen, and saddened by this melancholy termination to the day's adventures we pursued our way. Our journey was now nearly at a close, and soon after we commenced our precipitous descent to the Bay of Passages, which, with its narrow channel cut between two lofty rocks crowned with watch-towers, a glowing sunset gilding the French and English men-of-war that were riding at anchor under its high cliffs, closed our eventful day with a scene of splendour and beauty worthy of the chosen land of romance.

It was late that night when the body of the poor Frenchman, his presentiment thus fatally fulfilled, was brought to our inn.

A few days afterwards, a skirmish taking place between the Christians and Carlists, I learned from one of the officers of the legion who had been of the party, that among those fallen on the side of the enemy, he had recognised the body of the Italian.

THE TWO DESTINIES.

BY SIR FRANCIS DOYLE, BART.

WHO that has shared, or even remarked, the evening festivities of this metropolis, but has been called away, at least for a moment, from the gay delusions of life to its earnest and bitter realities, by observing the throng collected in the street round the door of the "illuminated house?" One would hope that the most vain and frivolous of pleasure-seekers must, one time or another, have been struck with this strange contrast going on, night after night, between the gazers and the gazed-upon, the squalid and the luxurious, the very rich and the very poor, here brought into close contact,—and yet how far from each other! The crowd is at first generally cheerful and good-humoured, and seem to look on the partakers of the pageants as the actors in a drama; but as the midnight hours advance, you may see in the now fewer faces the fearful consciousness that this is no mere play—no spectacle which the actors are making for their amusement, but a boastful display of pompous pleasure with which they can have nothing to do; and when the dim dawn comes on, and makes the vacant streets look so large and beautiful, some of that unhappy audience may be seen crouching and huddled on the neighbouring steps, houseless amid these thousand homes, hungry beside that festive profusion.

From such a scene Sir F. Doyle has drawn an affecting and graceful poem. He is already known to the world by a volume of verse, which is remarkable, in these days of reflection and introspection, for its vivid description of outer scenes, and its purity and force of diction. While others have been imitating Wordsworth, he has been improving on Scott; and his "Doncaster St. Leger" has quickened the pulses of many a sportsman not over-fond of books, and who felt somewhat surprised that he should find himself caring about verses.

There is, however, more inner life in the present Poem than in any other of our author's, and perhaps it is here that he is least successful: at least, others at once suggest themselves who can handle these subtleties with a nicer art, and we feel the defects of Sir Francis in remembering the excellences of Tennyson. But the Crabbe-like pictures of ordinary life are so good that we ought to be content with a form of genius peculiarly rare in the imaginations of our time.

The opening picture—

"Hark to the merry music, wide
It breaks from yonder house of pride;
Where luxury spreads her purple sail
To catch the fragrance of the gale,

And all that wealth can do, is done
 To gild the minutes as they run.
 Each window of the perfumed room
 Burns with keen splendour on the gloom ;
 The very air within it seems
 To flash and thrill with gem-like gleams ;
 Whilst a mock nature spreads and showers
 Voluptuous floods of breathing flowers ;
 And all things bright and soft combine,
 As if man's lot were yet divine ;
 And never touch of sin or care
 Had power or thought to enter there.

" Meanwhile, around the stately gate
 Throng creatures of a separate fate ;
 Hard-handed men, whose life alway
 Is a sore wrestle with the day ;
 And dingy women, wrinkled deep,
 Through schemes for bread and shorten'd sleep :
 With no ungentle thought they come,
 Each by a quenchless instinct led
 From that gay place to carry home
 Bright pictures to his gloomy bed :
 By coarse unsmiling toil oppress,
 They thirst for beauty and for rest ;
 And therefore, half unconscious why,
 On each sweet face that passes by
 They fix a pleased and grateful eye,
 With no more envy than is given
 To sunset clouds or stars in Heaven."

ere meet the Two Destinies—the one that of Edith Vere, passing into the gorgeous festival to meet the one she loves, and is about to marry—the other that of Ellen Gray, the perishing child of misery and vulgar sin ; for one moment the two girls gaze on each other, and bears a solemn feeling away :

" The high-born maid, against her will,
 By that pale face was haunted still ;
 And felt her joyous spirits wane
 In dim disquietude of pain,
 As half afraid, and half ashamed,
 Over *that* lot she turn'd to brood,
 And thoughts undreamt of and unnamed,
 Like living things, before her stood —
 Till, vision-like, the glittering whole
 About her seem'd to swim and roll,
 And a vague horror grasp'd her soul."

And Ellen Gray

—“shook her head, and sadly smiled,
 In pity on the radiant child,
 That one so bright and sweetly frank
 Should know so little of her state
 As to have faith in life, and thank
 The dull cold irony of fate,
 Bent, in bad mirth, to make her think
 She had no bitter cup to drink : ”

This is the only incident of the Poem, unless the meeting of the marriage-train of Edith and the pauper-funeral of Ellen may be called one : the rest is the parallel of the two lives of these girls, their births and their affections, and the constant parallelism is not managed with sufficient art ; the scheme of the two pictures—the continual looking “on this and that” is in itself monotonous ; neither is the opposite evil of confusion altogether avoided ; but any one who has written either verse or prose is aware of the exceeding difficulty of managing contrasts so that they may seem rather to suggest themselves than be forced on the reader.

When the daughter of Lord Vere was born,

“ Loud were the cheers round Wyndcliffe Hall,
 Merry the bells from Wyndcliffe Tower,
 And a deep breath of joy through all,
 To greet the coming of the flower.
 Out roll'd the amber ale in seas
 Through fifty shouting villages ; ”

while there

—“ lay in weakness on her bed,
 A woman, wanted to earn bread,
 Whose elder children, uncontroll'd,
 From hunger cried, and shook with cold,
 Whilst debts, like snakes, around them crept,
 And that poor mother, faint and chill,
 Under the ragged bed-clothes wept
 To see her needles idle still ;
 This was, into her home of clay,
 The advent of poor Ellen Gray.”

Edith grows up in “a fairy land of golden dreams,” where

“ A budding fault, in forethought mild,
 Is weeded from the unconscious child.”

But—

“ How, meanwhile, might poor Ellen fare ?
 Her childhood had no leave to wear

That golden gloss of infancy,
 (Ever above her, hovering high,
 The shadow of grim want,) she stood,
 Forced from the first to do her best,
 And join the strivings of the rest.
 In the hard school of poverty,
 She learnt the price of fuel and food
 And trusted to the roaring street,
 In baby phrase, on tottering feet,
 Haggled at stalls for bits of meat,
 Whilst mind and heart, of help were left,
 To nature and to chance bereft ;
 Wild flower and weed could come and go ;
 Virtue or vice at will might grow ;
 Unchecked, unguided on its way,
 Went the young step of Ellen Gray."

ness is added to hard toil — that dreadful sickness of the poor,
 every physical pain has its cognate moral agony !

" Then came from school the girl's recal,
 The decent wish, that she should learn
 Right ways and perfect to discern ;
 The mother's pride, to hear her child
 Praised as so docile and so mild,
 Melted, like wax in flame, away
 Before the hot need of the day.
 When bread grew scarce and fires gleamed rare,
 Her fingers were too deft to spare ;
 Some sorrow at the first there was, —
 Some hopeful talk, ' The worst might pass ;'
 ' Yes, next year better luck may bring ;'
 ' She shall return there in the spring ;'
 But Poverty kept near the door,
 And — it was spoken of no more."

father dies — the child is left alone with the failing mother.

" Her earnings fail'd them ; — one by one
 The few coarse goods they own'd were gone ;
 Those of a hard, yet happier, past,
 And of the dead they loved, went last ;
 Until the dingy bed was all
 Between each black and tottering wall.
 Vainly they called the Leech in aid,
 Not harsh, but hurried, scarce he stay'd
 Through that chill gloom, without remorse,
 To speak these crushing words of course —
 ' There is no help in drugs of mine ;
 ' She should have generous food and wine.' "

How is it to be bought? One way, and one only, Ellen knew
she had learnt it when

“ Paid hags with voices falsely sweet
Beset her in the shadowy street ;
Bewail'd her labours long and sore —
Kept offering much, and promised more.”

The price is paid—the food and wine bought—but too late : El
is left alone with her shame.

“ ‘ Rise up, pale Ellen, time is brief ;
Not to the poor comes rest in grief —
Rise, and go forth from this foul den,
To haggle among hard-eyed men,
With tighten'd brain and choking breath,
About the dark details of death.’ ”

“ So she went reckless, and became
The inmate of a house of shame —
‘ Yes, Ellen, well may shuddering deep
At that foul portal o'er thee creep : ’
Common, nay, vulgar as all seems,
It is a home of evil dreams ;
There broods around, above, within,
A cloud of immemorial sin ;
Shrieks baffled at the sullen door,
Old bloodshed covered on the floor,
Whose ghastly essence, spread through all,
Peers like a spirit from the wall.
There fair young things, the prey of fate,
Attired in mournful finery wait,
And forth to careless vice are led ;
All tremulous with ghostly dread —
No talk is their's of ball or play, —
Of glittering gems, or dresses gay ;
Low whispering in their dreary room
Of the dim peoplers of the gloom —
How from the boundless vaults below
Mysterious lights and moanings flow —
How some are fated to behold
The soldier slaughtered there of old —
How the Greek girl, lured in, then slain,
For double mercy screams in vain —
Bodiless voices thrill the air ;
Footsteps unseen are on the stair.
Wild shadows waver, day by day,
Draining the shatter'd heart away ;

Whilst close about, within a call,
Throng'd London's busiest murmurs fall,
And the black home of ghosts is rife
With all the ocean sound of life."

the picture has haunted us ever since we read it; and the author in his preface mentions that he happens to know that such traditions, and the effects produced thereby on the wretched inhabitants, still cling to these abodes of miserable vice.

Edith and Ellen both are loved—the one with a pure enduring passion, the other by one who

——— "smiled to see
The outburst of that burning glee,
By her heart fountains musing stray'd
To watch them, as in flame they play'd;
Fed her on kindness, as you fling
Seed to a bird, that it may sing;
And made a study and a toy
Of the deep passion of her joy."

Edith is the one bright spot in the dark life of Ellen.

" ' Forecast not, pause not, tremble not —
' This is the wine-cup of thy lot —
' Drink, Ellen, drink! — whilst o'er it set
' The fiery freshness wrestles yet —
' Drink, Ellen, drink! — joy foams away;
' Night follows fast the golden day:
' This hour is thine — the next may shiver
' The chalice in thy grasp for ever."

Edith so it is — she is "put by in sated curiosity" — jealousy and she takes full possession of her soul and body — at last her health fails, —

——— "and anon
A burning thirst for death came on.
Oft in the living dreams of night
Her mother kiss'd her, clothed in white —
Oft, crowned with stars, before her moved
The infant sister whom she loved; —
Whilst low sweet voices seemed to say,
' Desolate creature, come away.' "

* * * *

" Thus with life's leaf just on the fall,
Ellen saw Edith at the ball."

Edith too has had her sorrows, but has surmounted them, and she is married; while

— "Ellen's earthly end drew near,
Not comfortless — friends early known
Found her dying, homeless, and alone;
They had been harsh at first, and torn
Her spirit with their clamorous scorn;
Still be not sudden to condemn,
For character was bred to them;
To their dim hearths a tainted fume
Brought penury no less than shame —
Yet when she sunk beneath the load,
Their honest English hearts outflow'd —
They lull'd her pain, they soothed her mind;
Softly and delicately kind,
Till, praying with her latest breath,
She brighten'd gently into death."

There are many beautiful passages to which space does not permit us to allude; but it is not likely that those we have quoted will let this poem pass unnoticed. It is indeed an interesting and grateful symptom of our time, that the subjects to which our poetical youth turns itself are especially such as embrace large and common sympathy: the old sentimentality has given place to genuine sentiment — the old rage of selfish passion has subsided into the play of generous affection. Did this poem contain but half its beauty, and were the defects of its versification (and it has some) ten times greater than they really are, still it would be well it had been written; — it would still interest humanely, and please usefully; and men would find in it echoes of their best thoughts and responses to their best feelings.

THE ECHO.

THE article on the Leader of the Opposition, which was announced for publication in our present Number, is unavoidably deferred.

Correspondents in our next.

HOOD'S MAGAZINE

AND

Comic Miscellany.

OUR FAMILY:

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ALTERCATION.

THOSE two angry females—just imagine them, ripe for their verbal duel!—Mrs. Hopkins fierce, resolute, and pale as the mask, in marble, of an ancient Fury: Kezia, with her homely person, coarse limbs, scrubby head, staring eyes, and that violent red blotch on her cheek, not unlike the ill-painted figure-head of the Bellona, or some such termagant ship of war.

“O you wretch!” began Kezia, panting for utterance.

“Wretch yourself!” returned the woman. “Who gave you leave to meddle?”

“Those babes—those blessed babes!” exclaimed Kezia; “to want them devoured in their innocent cradle by a wild man of the woods! Babes only fit to devour with kisses—and such as would soften any heart but a stone one, that nothing will touch, except the fizzling stuff as cleans marble!”

“Say, muriatic acid,” suggested Mr. Postle.

“Twin babes, too!” continued Kezia, “the very pictures of heavenly innocence—and might sit to a painter for a pair of Cherubims!—and to abuse them so—it’s almost blasphemy—it’s next to irreligious!”

"Heyday!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins; "here's a fuss, indeed, about babies!—As if there was no more of them in the world! Prize one, no doubt. I should like to see them soaped and scrambled for!"

"You would!" cried Kezia, almost in a scream;—"you would! Oh! you wicked, wicked monster!"

"Monsters are for caravans," said the woman; "and if I was you, before I talked of monsters, I would go to some quack doctor,"—and she glanced viciously at my father—"for a cosmetical wash, to make both my cheeks of a colour."

"My cheeks are as God made them," said Kezia; "so it's Providence's face that you're flying into, and not mine. But I don't mind personals. It's your cruel ill-wishing to those precious infants; and which to look at would convert a she-ogress into a maternal character. Do you call yourself a mother?"

"Do *you*?" asked the woman with a spiteful significance.

"No I don't," answered Kezia, "and not fit I should. I'm a single spinster, I know, and therefore not a motherly character; but I may stand up, I hope, without committing matrimony, for two helpless innocent babes. Dear little infants, too, as I've washed, and worked for and fed with my own hands; and nussed on my own lap; and lulled on my own buzzum; and as such I don't mind saying, whomever attacks them, I'm a lioness with her yelps."

"Whelps, Kizzy, whelps,"—but Kizzy was too angry to notice the correction.

"A rampant lioness sure enough! And if I was your keeper," said Mrs. Hopkins, with a malicious glance at my father, "I'd keep you to your own den. The business hasn't improved so much, I believe, as to require another assistant."

The wrath of Kezia was at its climax. Next to an attack on the family, a sneer at the business was a sure provocative. "I know my place," she said, "and my provinces. It's the kitchen, and the back kitchen, and the washus, and the nussery; and if I did come into the surgery, it was to beg a little lunatic caustic to burn off a wart. As for our practice, Mr. Postle must answer for himself. All I know is, he can hardly get his meals for making up the prescriptions; what with mixing draughts, and rolling pills and boluses, and spreading blisters and Bergamy pitch plasters, and pounding up drugs into improbable powders."

"Impalpable," said my father.

"Well, impalpable. Not to name the operations, such as cupping, and flea botany, and distracting decayed teeth."

"Extracting," said my father, "the other would be a work of supererogation."

"Well, extracting—and the vaccinating besides,—and all the visiting on horseback and on foot, — private and parishional, — including the workus. Then there's Master himself," continued Kezia, dropping a sort of half curtesy to him, as an apology for the liberty of the reference, — "if he gets two nights' rest in a week, it's as much as he does, what with confinements, and nocturnal attacks, and sudden accidents, — it's enough to wear out the Night Bell! There was this

very morning, between one and two, he was called up, out of his warm bed, to the Wheel of Fortune, to sow up a juggler."

"Jugular," said my father.

"Well, jugular.—And the night before, routed out of his first sleep by a fractious rib. I only wonder we don't advertise in the papers for a partner, for there's work enough for a firm. First there's a put-out shoulder to be put in again, — then a broken limb to set, — and next a cracked penny cranium to be japanned ——"

She meant trepanned, and the correction was on my father's lips, but was smothered in the utterance by the vehement Mrs. Hopkins. "Japan a fiddlestick!" she cried, impatiently rolling her head from side to side, and waving her hands about, as if battling with a swarm of imaginary gad-flies. "What do I care for all this medical rigmarole?"

"Oh! of course not!" said Kezia, "not a brass button. Only when people affront our practise, and insinuate that we have a failing business, it's time to prove the reverse. But perhaps you're incredible. There was no such thing, I suppose, as the pison'd charity-boy, with his head as big as two, and his eyes a-squeezing out of it, because of eating a large red toadstool, like a music-stool, in loo of a mushroom."

"There might, and there might not," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"I thought as much!" exclaimed Kezia, "and in course you never heard of the drowned female who was dragged out of the canal, a perfect sop! and was shocked into life again, by our galvanic battering?"

"I never did," replied Mrs. Hopkins.

"Oh no—not you!" said Kezia, bitterly. "Nor the stabbed Irishman, as was carried into this very surgery, all in a gore of blood, and pale, and fainting away, and in a very doubtful state indeed, till Master applied a styeptic."

"A styptic," said my father, "a styptic."

"Well, a styptic. And maybe you've not heard neither of the scalded child — from pulling a kettle of boiling water over her poor face and neck, — and which was basted with sweet oil, and drudged with flour, and was so lucky as to heal up without leaving a cockatrice."

"If I was you," said Mrs. Hopkins, "I would say a cicatrix."

"Well, perhaps I ought," said Kezia. "Howsomever there wasn't a scar or a seam on her skin,—so that's a cure at any rate. Then there's the Squire. — But, maybe, nobody has seen his groom come galloping, like life or death, to fetch Master to a consulting of the faculty — no, nor the messenger from the Rectory — nor the Curate himself dropping in here for medical advice, — quite out of sorts, he said, and as hoarse as a raven with a guitar."

"A catarrh," said my father, "a catarrh!"

"Well, catarrh — and couldn't swallow for an enlarged tonsor in his throat."

It is uncertain how much farther Kezia might have "carried on the business," and improved it, but for an importunate voice which began calling in a stage whisper for Mrs. H. Mrs. Hopkins looked towards

the road, where a shadow had for some time been fluttering on the threshold, whilst part of the skirt of a female garment dodged about the door-post, and a bobbing head now and then intercepted the sunshine, and uttered its subdued summons. But as Mrs. H. did not seem inclined to obey the call, the Unknown stepped, or rather stumbled, into the surgery, for she was purblind from a complaint in her eyes, and therefore wore a green shade, so deep, that it shadowed her crimson nose, like a pent-house over a pet carnation. The two females were obviously confederates, for the new-comer took up a position beside her predecessor, with a determined air and attitude which showed that the broadside of the Tartar would be supported by a volley from the Vixen. Kezia, who would have engaged a fleet of shrews in the same cause, maintained as bold a front, and there wanted but the first shot to bring on a general action, when my father interposed, and suspended hostilities by a friendly salute.

"Glad to see you, Mrs. Pegge."

"That's as may turn out," replied Mrs. Pegge, throwing back her head, with her chin up in the air, and looking along her nose, at the Doctor, in a posture, as it seemed, of the most ineffable disdain.

"Your sight must be better at any rate," said my father, "to let you come out so far without a guide."

"Well, it is better," said Mrs. Pegge, and then turning as on a pivot to her ally — "No thanks to nobody, eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"I didn't follow the Doctor's directions,—did I, Mrs. H.?"

"Certainly not."

"And should have been no better if I had — eh? Mrs. H.?"

"Not a tittle," said Mrs. Hopkins, "but quite the reverse."

"It isn't the hopthelmy at all, — is it, Mrs. H.?"

"By no manner of means."

"Nor gutty serený — it don't come from the stomach — do it, Mrs. H.?"

"Not in the least."

"I never said that it did," put in my father, more tickled than hurt by the attack on his medical skill.

"Of course not," said Mrs. Pegge; "you'd have been wrong if you had, — for it's Amor Rosis — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Exactly so — the very name," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"I can guess where they got that," muttered Mr. Postle, just loud enough to be heard by his principal; but my father was in too good a humour, and rubbing his nose too briskly to be accessible to sinister suspicions.

"Well, well," he said, with a tone and smile of conciliation enough to have smoothed a pair of ruffles into Quakerly wristbands. "Amor, in the eye, is a very common affection amongst females, and so you may be right. And in spite of all that has passed, should you or Mrs. Hopkins wish at any time for medical advice or medicaments——"

"Oh, no, no, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Pegge, tossing her head like a horse at the hay-rack. "We are poor, — but we won't be experimented on any longer — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"The Lord forbid!" cried Mrs. H. "We've been too much experimented upon already!"

"Perhaps," said Mr. Postle, determined to test his secret suspicions, "you had better seek other advice."

"Eh, what?" asked Mrs. Pegge, wheeling about with her green verandah, till she brought her red ferret-like eyes to bear on the assistant. "What might you say, young man?"

"I said, that perhaps you had better seek other advice."

"Perhaps *we have*," replied Mrs. Pegge, with a suppressed chuckle, and the usual appeal for confirmation to Mrs. H.

"We certainly did," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"And whatever was advised," said Mrs. Pegge, "there was one thing not recommended, namely, for a young child to sleep in an apiary — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"If you mean with a monkey," said Mrs. Hopkins, "most decidedly not."

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Pegge, "Doctor Shackle knows better than that — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"I said so!" exclaimed Mr. Postle, with a slap of his hand on the desk that would have crushed a beetle into a dead flat.

"Hush, hush," whispered my father. "Dear me, you have killed the poor inky fly!"

"Curse the fly!" cried Mr. Postle, fairly beside himself with vexation. "I wish they had both been in its skin, — a couple of ungrateful old Jezebels!"

"He! he! he!" tittered Mrs. Pegge. "Some people will want one of their own cooling draughts!"

"Why you ungrateful creature!" cried Kezia, whose face had been purpling and swelling with indignation till it seemed ready to burst like an over-ripe gooseberry. "I wonder you can name a 'fever-vescing draught, for fear of its flying in your face!"

"Hoity toity!" said Mrs. Pegge, turning on Kezia, with her green shade over her glistening red eyes, like an angry Hooded Snuke. —

"What have we here? — A Hen Doctor — a 'pothecary in petticoats?"

"I don't mind names," answered Kezia, "so you may be as scrofulous as you please."

"Scurrilous," said my father.

"Well, scurrilous. I don't mind that," continued Kezia. "It's your base return for our pharmacy, and your sneers at our practise. Such shocking unthankfulness! And to think of all the good physic you have enjoyed, gratis!"

"Physic!" retorted Mrs. Pegge with a sneer of unutterable contempt. "Physic indeed! such physic! If it's so good, why don't you enjoy it yourself? I'm sure we don't want to rob you of it. If it was worth any thing it wouldn't be given away — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"My own words," replied Mrs. Hopkins, "to a syllable."

"It's not physic at all!" said Mrs. Pegge.

"No!" exclaimed my father: "what then?"

"It's the grouts of other people's," said Mrs. Pegge, "and that's

how we get it in charity. But come, Mrs. H., we have been long enough here."

"Quite," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"And it will be long enough before we come here again, — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Ages," said Mrs. Hopkins; and drawing the arm of her purblind confederate under her own, she led her towards the door, through which, — the one stumbling and the other limping — the two ingrates groped and hobbled away, and were seen no more.

"Say I told you so!" exclaimed Mr. Postle, desperately snatching up the pestle, but grinding nothing, except some inarticulate execrations between his teeth. My father even looked a little grave; and as for Kezia, she could only stare up at the ceiling, flap her hands about, and ejaculate "Oh, I never!"

"Yes, Shackle's at the bottom of it all," muttered Mr. Postle, shrewdly adopting my father's own mode of thinking aloud as a vehicle for administering his private sentiments. "Those two beldams have been prompted by him, that's certain, — and he has been called in at the Great House."

"He has?" said my father.

Postle, however, took no notice of the interrogation, but shook his head, despondingly, and proceeded. "That infernal little monkey has done for us! We shall never be sent for again, master or mate. No, no, a doctor who couldn't save such a little creature would never preserve so great a lady! So there is our best patient gone — gone — gone! And the Parish will go next, for Shackle has got the Board by the ear."

"Not he," said my father.

"Then he sells opium and we don't, and that gives him the village. The more fools we," — and Postle shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows — "We're unpopular with rich and poor. — I should not wonder, some day, if we were even to be hung or burnt in effigy!"

My father smiled, and rubbed his nose, and none the less, that Kezia clasped her hands and groaned aloud at the imaginary picture. But he repented of his mirth, when he saw her eyes, swimming in tears, fixed alternately on himself, and the assistant, as if they were already swinging like Guys, over the opprobrious bonfire.

"Postle — Mr. Postle" — he began, but the assistant continued his soliloquy.

"There's Widow Warner's child in one of her old convulsions —"

"Poor thing!" cried my father, "I will go and look to her directly!"

"But there has been no message," said Mr. Postle, suddenly waking up from his pretended fit of abstraction. "We're not sent for."

"No matter," said my father; and snatching up his hat, and clapping it on, the wrong side before, was about to hurry out of the surgery, when he was checked by an exclamation from Kezia.

"Gracious! — The yellow lamp is broke again!"

"Yes — last night — for the fifth time," said Mr. Postle.

"It is very strange," said my father, looking up at the gap in the

lanthorn, where there ought to have been a glass globe, filled with a certain yellow fluid; and which nightly, by the help of a lamp behind it cast a flaring advertisement over a post, across the road, and partly up a poplar tree on the opposite side of the way. "It is very strange — there must be some cause for it."

"Nobody breaks Shackle's green lamp," observed Mr. Postle.

My father made no reply; but, stepping hastily out of the surgery, set off—at what Postle called his acute pace, in opposition to his slower, or chronic one—towards the Widow Warner's Cottage.

CHAPTER IX.

OUR CARVER.

AMONGST my father's little vanities—and in him it was partly professional—he rather piqued himself on his dexterity in dividing a fowl or cutting up a joint of meat. The performance, nevertheless, was generally a slovenly one,—not for want of skill in the operator, but through the fault of the carver, which was as blunt as any *messer* in Germany.

Every family has some standing nuisance of the kind,—a smoky chimney, a creaking door, a bad lock, a stiff hinge, or a wayward clock, which, in spite of a thousand threats and promises, never gets Rumfordized, oiled, mended, eased, rectified, or regulated. Our stock grievance was the carver. In vain Kezia, who never grudged what she called elbow-grease, rubbed the steel to and fro, and round and round, and laboured by the hour to sharpen the obstinate instrument; wherever the fault lay, in her manipulation, the metal, the knife-board, or the Flanders brick, the thing remained as dull as ever. My father daily hacked and haggled, looked at the edge, then at the back of the blade, and passed his finger along both, as if in doubt which was which,—pshaw'd—blessed his soul—wondered who could cut with such a thing—and swore, for the hundredth time, that the carver must and should go to the cutler's. Perhaps, as he said this so positively, it was expected that the carver would go of itself to the grindstone: however, it never went; but Kezia and the knife rubbed on till the board, and the brick, and my father's patience were nearly worn out together. The dinner-tool was still as blunt as a spade; and might have remained so till Doomsday, but for the extraordinary preparations for the Christening, when, every other household article having undergone a furbishing, the eye of our maid-of-all-work fell on the refractory knife, which she declared—please the pigs—should go forthwith to be set and ground by Mr. Weldon the smith.

Luckily there was an errand due in the same direction; so huddling herself into her drab shawl, and flinging on her black bonnet, without tying the strings—for there was no time for nicety—away went Kezia through the village at her best pace,—a yellow earthenware

basin in one hand, and the naked carving-knife in the other; a combination, be it said, rather butcherly, and to a country-bred mind inevitably suggestive of pig-sticking, and catching the blood for black puddings: but the plain homely Kezia, who seldom studied appearance, or an ideal picture of her own person, held sturdily on her way, with striding legs and swinging arms, the domestic weapon flashing to the sunshine in her red right hand. How her thoughts were occupied, may be guessed,—that the usual speculations of menials had no place in her brain. Instead of thinking of sweethearts, fairings, ribbons, new bonnets, cast-off gowns, tea and sugar, the kitchen stuff, vails, perquisites, windfalls, petty peculations, warnings, raised wages, and what did or did not belong to her place, her mind was busy with the Baptism, the dear babes, Mrs. Prideaux, her master, mistress, and Mr. Postle, and generally all those household interests in which her own were as completely merged and lost as water is in water. Amongst these the medical interest of course held a prominent place, and induced in her, not only a particular attention to the practice and the patients, but a general observance—which became habitual—of looks and symptoms, with a strong tendency, moreover, to exhibit what she called her physical knowledge. This propensity she was enabled to indulge in her passage along “the Street,” a long straggling row of one-storied cottages, mud-built and thatched, and only separated by the road in front from the sluggish river, which added its unwholesome damps to the noxious effluvia from mouldy furniture, musty garments, and perhaps rancid provisions, and sluttish accumulations of dust and dirt, in dark, ill-ventilated rooms. At the back, dotted with stunted willow-pollards, and windmills, and intersected by broad ditches, lay the Fens, a dreary expanse, flat as a map, and as diversely coloured by black and brown bogs, water, purple heath, green moss, and various crops, blue, red, and yellow, including patches of hemp and flax, which at certain seasons were harvested and placed to steep in stagnant ponds, whence the rotting vegetable matter exhaled a pestilential malaria as fetid in its stench as deadly in its influence on the springs of health and life. The eyes of Kezia rested, therefore, on many a sickly sallow face and emaciated frame amongst the men and women who lounged or worked beside the open windows, and even in some of the children that played round the thresholds, biting monstrous cantles out of slices of bread and butter, or nursing baby brothers and sisters only half a size smaller than themselves. With all these people, big and little, Kezia exchanged familiar greetings, and nods and smiles of recognition, occasionally halting for a brief conference,—for example, to recommend “scurvy treatment” for little Bratby, to prescribe a dose of “globular salts” for the younger Modley, or to hint to Mrs. Pincott, whose infant was suffering from dentition, that its gums wanted “punctuation” with the lancet. But at one house she paused to deliver an especial salute; for on the door-step sat little Sally Warner, cuddling her arms in her pinafore, and upturning a cheerful chubby face, with a fair brow, bright blue eyes, and rosy cheeks, but sadly disfigured between the snubby nose and dimpled chin, and all round the pretty mouth, by an

eruption which might have been averted by a timely dose of brimstone and treacle, — a spectacle Kezia no sooner observed than abruptly stopping for an instant, with a certain gesture, she pronounced certain ambiguous words, so appalling, in one sense, that the scared child immediately fled indoors to her widowed mother, on whose lap, after a paroxysm of grief and terror, she went off into one of those constitutional fits to which she had been subject from her cradle.

Poor Kezia! How little she dreamt that, by merely pointing at a child with a carving-knife, and saying, "You want opening!" she was seriously endangering a young life! How little she thought that she was preparing for her dear master another of those mortifications which were beginning to throng round him so thickly as to justify the old proverb, that misfortunes never come single, but are gregarious in mischief, and hunt in packs like the wolves.

In the mean time my father, good easy man! walked on quite unconscious of the impending annoyance; for the incident of the carving-knife, which furnished this little episode, occurred prior to the scene in the surgery recorded in the last chapter.

CHAPTER X.

THE VISIT; AND THE VISITATION.

A GOOD man, of kindly impulses, and contented with their gratification, is not apt to resent very violently the ungracious reception of his benefits; but, however indifferent on his own account, he cannot help feeling some vexation, partly for the sake of the ingrate himself, and partly on behalf of mankind in general. There is a wrong done to the species; a slur cast on human nature; and his cheek flushes, if not with personal indignation, with shame for his race. Thus, there are men whom a series of injuries, readily forgiven, have failed to convert into misanthropes; but have inspired, nevertheless, with a profound melancholy.

Something of this depression probably weighed down my father's spirits, seeing that he walked without his usual music, the whisper of a whistle, and looking earthwards besides — as if out of tune for sunshiny thoughts — into his own shadow — heedless alike of the sparrow's taking a dust-bath in the road, and the wagtail that kept just a-head of him by a series of short swift runs, its delicate legs almost invisible from the rapidity of their motion, and its tail, at every halt, balancing with that peculiar vibration from which the bird derives its name.

And yet the scene was much brighter than when he had last paced the same road: the day was fine, and the landscape as lovely and cheerful as its "capabilities" allowed. The river glittered in the sun; the bleak rose at the flies, making numberless rings and dimples

in the surface; and myriads of minnows and stickle-backs — for which the water was famous — wheeled and manoeuvred in dark shoals, like liquid clouds, amidst the shallows; while larger fish skulked in the eddies round the lock-gates, or glistened silverly through the intricate golden arabesques that sparkled in the rippled water, and thence reflected, danced on the piles of the dam, and the supports of the Dutch-looking swing-bridge. For a swarm of expatriated Flemings had settled aforetime in the neighbourhood; and by the style of such erections had made the country, in its artificial features, as well as in its natural aspect, very similar to their own.

On the other hand lay the broad ditch; here and there widening into a little pool, that bristled with rushes and flags, amidst patches of brown water, and green scum, and aquatic weeds, enlivened by numerous yellow blossoms, like bathing buttercups, over which the red, blue, or green dragon flies, all head and tail — like glorified tadpoles — darted about on their gauzy wings; or with a dipping motion, regular as a pulsation, deposited their eggs in the stagnant fluid; or settled, and clung motionless to some reedy stem. In the clear spaces, the water-spider, skating without ice, performed its eccentric evolutions on the surface; whilst clouds of gnats pertinaciously hovered over some favourite spot, though dissipated again and again by the flutter of the fly bird, hawking at insects, and returning after each short flight to perch on the same dead twig of the alder. The bank was gay with flowering weeds, and covered with tangled verdure — plants, shrubby, pyramidal, and pendulous, interlaced and festooned by straggling creepers and parasites, out of which, at intervals, struggled the trunk of the pollard willow, still clasped by the glossy ivy, and embossed with golden or emerald moss — or the silvery stem of the aspen, up-turning at every breath the hoary side of its twinkling leaves, and changing its foliage from green to grey, and from grey to green, with the variable shades of the summer sea. The very slime oozing round the muddy margin of the pool, and filling the holes poached by the feet of horses and cattle, assumed prismatic tints; whilst the fresh splashes, running up into the road-ruts, glanced alternate blue and white with the shifting sky: in short, there was all the beauty that colour, change, light and shade, life and motion, can give to even common-place objects; and on which, generally, my father, a lover of nature, would not have turned a careless eye, no more than he would have let the sedge-bird warble, as unheard as invisible, amongst the waving reeds.

But his mind was pre-occupied. In spite of himself the harsh voice of Mrs. Hopkins still echoed in his ear; he still saw the red and black eyes of Mrs. Pegge glimmering, like live charcoal, under their green shade. With every step, however, the image and the sounds became fainter, and the cloud passed away from his soul.

"Pshaw," he said to himself, "I am as unreasonable as the old women! Poor creatures, that have hardly daily bread enough to justify a thanksgiving — and to expect from them a grace before and after a dose of physic! To be sure they might have been more civil — *and yet*, poor, ragged, infirm, disappointed in life, and diseased —

the one half-blind and the other a cripple — what worldly sugar have they in their cup to sweeten their dispositions? — What cream of comfort, or soothing syrup, to make them mild, affable, and good-humoured? And besides, what do they meet with themselves from society at large but practical rudeness? Scorned and shunned because penniless and shabby; oppressed, snubbed, and wronged, because weak and powerless; neglected and insulted, because old and ugly; and unceremoniously packed off at last, as no longer ornamental, useful or profitable, to that human lumber-hole, the workhouse! Accustomed to endure poverty without pity, age without reverence, want without succour, pain without sympathy, — what wonder if their minds get warped with their frames, and as sensitive to slights and affronts as their bodies to damp and cold winds, — if their judgments become as harsh as their voices, or if their tempers sharpen with their features? What wonder if their prejudices stiffen with their limbs—their whims increase with their wrinkles — their repinings with their infirmities — nay, if their very hearts harden with their fates, or their patience fails utterly under the tedious suffering of some chronic disease, which Art can only palliate, whilst Hope perhaps promised a cure? No, no, we must not expect too much from human nature under such trials, and so many privations! — And so let them enjoy their discontents,” said my father, raising his voice: “the worse for them, poor souls, that they are past other pleasure! — and if grumbling be a comfort, who would grudge it, any more than their solitary luxury — a pinch of snuff?”

“Or a drop of lodnum,” grumbled a surly voice.

My father looked up, and recognised the speaker; but the man, gazing straight before him, as if suddenly seized with a stiff neck, passed hastily by, to escape the words which pursued him.

“Yes, yes, Roger Heap, or a dram of oxalic acid, which I would as soon sell you as the other. It’s the curse of the county, what with their laudanum drops — and opie pills — and syruiping the infants — and if ever I saw a flower like a well-frilled last night-cap it’s the White Poppy!”

My father stopped, for he had reached the widow’s pretty cottage, and stepping through the open front door, walked into the parlour. It was a small room, neatly but tastily furnished; for Mrs. Warner had been left in easy circumstances by her late husband, a farmer, in those prosperous war times when farmers reaped golden harvests; and long before the distressed agriculturist learned to cry “*Ichaboe!* My glory is departed from me! and I am dependent for profitable crops on a species of foreign Penguin, of dirty habits!” His competence, indeed, was rapidly growing into a fortune, when he perished suddenly after a market-dinner by an accident which, communicated too abruptly to the widow, made her, prematurely, the mother of an infant, afflicted from its ill-starred birth with convulsions. A black profile of the father hung over the mantel-piece, beside the old-fashioned mirror; and in his vacant elbow-chair, beside the fire-place, reposed his favourite terrier, blind with age, and asthmatic, from the pampering of his mistress, whose whole affections were divided, though in un-

equal portions, between her little Sally and the dog. At the sound of a strange foot the wheezy animal uttered a creaking growl, but quickly began to thump the damask seat with his tail on recognizing my father, already met, or rather intercepted, by the widow, who, omitting her usual courtesy, placed herself directly before him, so as to bar his passage to the inner room.

"Well, and how is Sally?" asked my father, kindly looking down at the diminutive widow, for she was the smallest woman, to use the popular description, "that ever stood in shoe leather, not to be an absolute dwarf." Besides which, since Master Warner's death, she had pined and wasted away to a perfect atomy, and looked even less than she really was in that pinched cap and the black dress which reduced her figure. Not that she fretted visibly, or wept: her eyes shed no more tears than those of the peacock plumes over the old mirror; but if grief has a *dry rot* of its own, by that decay she had crumbled away till her whole widowed body, as my father said, contained but just clay enough to make one little lachrymatory urn. In truth, she was singularly withered and shrivelled, and, in the common belief, still shrank so rapidly as to beget a notion amongst the more imaginative of the village children, that she would eventually dwindle to the fairy standard, and then disappear.

"Well, how is Sally?" asked my father: "I hear she has had a fit."

"She has," answered the tiny widow. Her very voice seemed smaller than usual, and to come, a mere sibilant murmur, through her thin compressed lips and closed teeth.

"Poor thing! I'll go in and look at her," said my father, making one step sideways, and then another forward.

"There is no need," said the widow, stepping one pace backward, and then another sideways, so as to still keep in his front.

"Is she well then?"

"No."

"I had better see her then," said my father.

"Doctor Shackle has seen her," said the widow.

"Quite right—he was the nearest"—replied my father, who was as free from the professional as from any other species of jealousy.

"Quite right! then I am easy about her—for she is in good hands."

Just as my father pronounced this eulogium the object of it issued from the inner room; and the little widow, stepping apart, left the rival doctors—if there can be rivalry all on one side—standing face to face. What a contrast it was! my father, plump, rosy as a red-streak, and bright-eyed—one of those men of the old school who looked handsome in hair-powder; the other a tall bony personage, sandy haired, with large yellow whiskers, stony light grey eyes, a straight sharp nose, high cheek-bones, colourless cheeks, and thin lips, parted in a perpetual smile that resulted less from good temper than good teeth—a proper enough personification of Lent, reminding one of the hard sordid dryness of the stockfish, and the complexion of the parsnip. Then, his manners were cold and reserved, his voice uniform in its tone—his words few and sarcastic, and often marked

in *italics*, by a sneering curl of the lip—one of those men from whose veins, if pricked, you would expect not blood but milk—not milk warm and sweet, but acrid like that of the dandelion—men whose livers, you feel sure, are white; their hearts of the palest flesh-colour, and always on the wrong side; their brains a stinging jelly, like the sea-nettle. That my father, one of the warmest of the warm-blooded animals, could endure such a polypus—that they could meet without his instinctively antipathising and flying off, was proof of his easy disposition, his exquisite temper, his childlike simplicity, large faith in human goodness, and catholic attraction towards all his race.

“Well, Doctor,” said my father, “how is the little patient?”

“All safe now,” answered Shackle. “But a terrible shock to the system—tremendous fit—brought on by a fright.”

“A fright?”

“Yes: some fool or other, with a knife, or magical instrument, or something—threatened to rip her up.”

“The brute deserved a flogging!” exclaimed my father.

“I think so, too,” said Shackle, with a glance aside at the mother.

“Why, the brute, as you call her,” began the widow, but was checked by Shackle, who placed his finger on his lip, and, stooping down to her ear, whispered,

“Assumed ignorance!”

“Poor child!” said my father; “I have been quite anxious about her.”

“You must have been,” said Shackle; “you came so quickly!”—a sarcasm my father, in the innocence of his heart, mistook for a civility.

“It happened hours ago,” remarked the little widow.

“Is it possible!” cried my father. “But I knew nothing of it—not a syllable.”

Shackle said nothing, but looked incredulously at the widow, who replied, by an almost imperceptible shake of the head.

“Postle only told me,” said my father, “about ten minutes since.”

“Oh, that Postle!” exclaimed Shackle, “what a treasure he must be!”

“He is, indeed,” said my father, quite unconscious of the intended sneer.

“And that—what’s her name?—Kezia?” cried Shackle, “taking such a family interest in every thing—even to the medical practice!”

At the mention of Kezia and medical practice, the figure of the little widow appeared to dilate; her eyes flashed, and her tiny tongue began rapidly to moisten her thin lips; but before she could speak, Shackle broke in with some directions about the sick child; and then seizing my father by the arm, hurried him out of the cottage. “I have another case to attend,” he said, “and a very urgent one.”

“I hope the present one,” said my father, “is going on favourably.”

“Oh, quite; she is all right;” answered Shackle. “By the by,

I hope I am excused. There is a certain etiquette between medical men,—and I ought to apologise for interfering with one of your patients.”

“Not at all ! not at all !” cried my father. “We are both of us engaged in the same great mission—co-operators in the good work of alleviating human suffering.”

“Exactly so—of the same order of *charity*,” said Shackle, with a sneering emphasis on the last word, intended secretly for my father’s gratuitous practice. “Yes, both of us are of one fraternity, or, as we should be called abroad, Brothers of Mercy,”—a phrase which so delighted my father, that, seizing Shackle’s hand between both his own, he warmly urged a request conceived some minutes before.

“With the utmost pleasure,” replied Shackle, bowing, and returning the squeeze with apparent cordiality ; and then the two doctors parted—one with an ivory smile on his face, that vanished the moment he turned his back ; the other with a kindly glow on his countenance which promised to endure till the next meeting.

My father, however, instead of turning homewards, guided by some vague impulse, bent his steps towards the dwelling of the Hobbesses.—To see, after so many disappointments, how his kind intentions had thriven in that quarter ? Perhaps so. Meanwhile little Sally was safe, and his whistle was resumed. He was conscious of the warmth and glory of the sunshine ; heard and enjoyed the carol of the lark ; observed the grey goose leading her callow yellow gulls across the road to the river ; and laughed at the consequential airs of the hissing gander, as he sailed on, with raised stern, and one broken wing hanging down at his side, like the weather-board of a Dutch yacht. But a stranger spectacle was in store for him—a low mud cottage, rudely thatched with brown mossy straw and reeds—the broken panes of its one window stopped with dingy rags—and two men, in the livery of the magpie but repudiating its loquacity, in short, two Mutes, in black and white, standing one on each side of the humble door ! My father stopped and rubbed his eyes like a man “drowned in a dream.” But no, there they were, the two mummers, with their paraphernalia in their hands, surrounded by an undress circle of the village children, backed by an outer ring of men and women, who stared over their black, white, brown, red, yellow, cropped or curly little heads.

In another minute there was a stir and murmur of expectation amongst the crowd,—and first a black and white hat, and then a man in black with a white scarf, came stooping through the low door ; followed by two other men in sables, carrying a little coffin, covered with French grey cloth, and studded with silvered nails. After a pause, as if to afford time for the spectators to gaze and comment on the handsome coffin and its ornaments, another attendant threw over it a black velvet pall with a white border ; and then came forth the mourners, stumbling over the threshold, the Mother with a white handkerchief at her eyes ; but the Father with his grief, all unveiled, writhing in his hard-featured yellow face. The silk hood and scarf but partially concealed the shabby ragged clothing of the poor woman ; and the funeral mantle was far too short for the tall man, whose mud-stained

orduroys were visible a foot below its skirt; whilst one half of his nest and worst beaver, brown in colour and of no particular shape, bulged out roughly above the sleek hat-band which encircled it, and hence flowed down his nape, and with a full convex curve over his high round shoulders. There was a moan from the crowd as the mourners appeared, and then a hush, only broken by the sobs of the bereaved parents, whereat the tender-hearted of the circle looked tearfully at each other, and clasped their hands. At last the man in black with the white scarf—composing his face as it were to some inaudible Dead March—solemnly took three steps forward, and then suddenly wheeling about, walked six steps backwards, with his eyes steadfastly fixed on the moving pall which followed him—and then three more steps backwards, but on his tiptoes, to look over the pall at the mourners—when, all being right, he turned round again, and walked on, as slowly as he could pace, to eke out the very short distance between the hut of mourning and the church. The crowd, which had opened to the procession, closed again, and followed in its wake—men, women, boys, and girls, all seriously or curiously interested in Death, except the vacant baby faces, which leaning chubbily on the mothers' shoulders, looked quite the other way.

"A foolish job, bean't it?" said an old woman, leaning on a crutch,—too lame to follow the funeral. "To chuck away money that way! Quite a waste, bean't it?"—and she put up a tin ear-trumpet, and turned its broad end towards my father.

"It is, indeed!" cried my father, surprised by such an echo of his own reflexions.

"Ay, bean't it?" repeated the old deaf woman. "And such poor paupers as them too—as might have had a burying by the parish!"

My father hesitated to answer. He knew the poor well; their intense abhorrence of a parish funeral; and the extreme sacrifices they would make to subscribe to a burial society, and secure a decent interment. But he thought it best to chime in with the old woman's humour.

"Of course they might:" he said. "The Hobbesses are on the parish books already, and the overseer would, no doubt, have given them an order on the parish undertaker."

"Who will take her?" asked the deaf woman.

My father loudly repeated his words.

"Ay—an order for a common deal box," screamed the old woman, in a voice so different to her former one, that my father looked round for another speaker. "A rough wooden thing, only fit for soap and candles! Look there!" and she pointed with her crutch—"I'd sooner bury a child o' mine, wi' a brickbat in yonder pool! But any thing is good enow for the like of us to be packed into. Ay, an old tea-chest, or a forrin fruit chest, with our pauper corpses a-bulgin out the sides, and showin, like the orangers, thro the cracks!"

"No, no, no!" shouted my father.

"But I say yes, yes," cried the old woman. "Screwed down in a common box, and jolted off, full trot, to be chucked into the parish pit-hole—and a good riddance of old rubbidge! And better that

than to be made a gift of, privily, to the parish doctor! Ay, you! you! you!" she screamed, shaking her crutch in my father's face—"with your surgical cuttings, and carvings, and 'natomizings! And can hardly have patience to wait till people are dead!"

"If I know what you mean," bawled my father, "I'll be 'natomized myself!"

"Oh! not you, forsooth!" answered the old woman, who had imperfectly heard the anecdote of Kezia and the carving-knife, and, like other deaf people, had made her own blundering version of the story. "But you long, you know you do, to cut open little Sally Warner, and to look in her inside for the cause of her fits!"

My father winced—it would have vexed Job himself.

"Plague take it!" he said, as much ruffled as it was possible for him to be in his temper. "I do believe some dog has run mad, and bitten all the old women in the village!"

"Ay, that comes home to you," cried the crabbed cripple. "And mind Death don't come home too—to your own twin babies. To begrudge poor Sukey Hobbes her funeral! Suppose it was even a hearse-and-six, with ostrich plumage—and why not? An only child, quite a doting-piece, and begrudged nothing in life, by fond parents, if it cost the last penny, and why should she be begrudged by them in death—and gold and silver in the house? And which some say was flung in, by night, through the window by Doctor Shackle, and that he owns to it, or leastways, don't deny it—but I say, chucked down the chimbley by a Guardian Angel, in the shape of a white pigeon, as was seen sitting on the roof."

"No doubt of it," shouted my father, rubbing his nose, and quite restored to good humour by his new metamorphosis. "There was a guardian angel seen lately sitting on a rock in America—only"—and he dropped his voice—"it turned out to be an exciseman tarred and feathered."

"That's true, then," said the old woman. "But the funeral will be coming back, and I must speak a condoling word to the Hobbesea. Poor souls! I know myself what it is to be childless—but it will be an everlasting blessed comfort and consoling to them to reflect they have given her such a genteel burying as was never seen afore in their spheres of life." And the old crone hobbled off on her crutch, leaving my father to whistle or talk to himself as he pleased. He did the last.

"Yes, the old deaf body is right. The money was intended for the comfort and consolation of the bereaved couple; and they were justified in seeking for them in the mode most congenial to their own feelings. An odd mode, to be sure, considering their usual habits and rank in life! And yet, why should not the poor have their whims and prejudices as well as the rich? Grief is grief, in high or low, and, like other morbid conditions, is apt to indulge in strange fancies. So let the guineas go—there are worse lavishings in this world than on the obsequies of an only child! And after all, if the money went foolishly, it came quite as absurdly—for medical attendance on a sick monkey!"

CHAPTER XI.

OUR DOCTOR'S BOY.

THE surgery was quiet—the assistant leisurely making up some sort of medical swan-shot—when my father entered, and hung up his hat.

"Well, I have met Doctor Shackle at last:—he was at Mrs. Warner's—and the child is better."

"I should like to meet him too," observed Mr. Postle, very calmly in tone, but squeezing his finger and thumb together so energetically, that the bolus which was between them—instead of a nose—was flattened into a lozenge.

"Then you will soon have that pleasure," said my father, "for I have asked him to the christening."

Mr. Postle turned faint, sick, red, and then white, with disgust: symptoms the Doctor must have observed, but that his attention was absorbed by a phenomenon elsewhere.

It was Catechism Jack,—who after a preliminary peep or two from behind the door-post, at last crept, with a sidling gait and a sheepish air, into the surgery, where by eccentric approaches, like those of a shy bird, he gradually placed himself at the counter.

"Well, Jack," said my father, "what do you want?"

Jack made no reply; but dropping his head on his right shoulder, with a leer askance at my father, plucked his sodden finger out of his mouth, and pointed with it to one of the drawers.

"You see," said my father, in an aside to Postle, "the fellow is not quite a fool. He remembers where the lozenge came from."

"Mere animal instinct," answered Postle, in the same under tone: "a monkey would do as much, and remember the canister where he got a lump of sugar."

"I will try him further," said my father, putting his hand in the drawer for a lozenge, which he held out between his finger and thumb. "Well, Jack, what will you do if I give you this?" Jack eyed the lozenge—grinned—looked at my father; and then drawled out his answer.

"I'll say my Catechism."

"No, no, Jack," cried my father, "we don't want that. But will you be a good boy?"

"Yes," said Jack, his head suddenly drooping again, while a cloud passed over his face. Yes, I will,—and not tumble down stairs."

"Poor fellow!" said my father. "They made a fault of his misfortune. I have a great mind to take him. Should you like, Jack, to get your own living?"

"Yes," answered Jack with alacrity, for my father had unconsciously given him a familiar cue—"to learn and labour truly to get

my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life to which it may please God to call me."

"Catechism again!" whispered Mr. Postle.

"Yes, but aptly quoted and applied," answered my father. "Do you know, Jack, what physic is?"

Jack nodded, and pantomimically expressed his acquaintance with medicine by making a horrible grimace.

"Well, but speak out, Jack," said my father. "Use your tongue. Let us hear what you know about it. What's physic?"

"Nasty stuff," said Jack, "in a spoon."

"Yes," said my father, "or in a wine-glass, Jack, or in a cup. Very good. And do you remember my foot-boy Job, who used to carry out the physic in a basket?"

Jack nodded again.

"Should you like to take his place, and carry out the medicine in the same way?"

"I—don't—know," drawled Jack, sympathetically sucking his finger, while he ogled the little oval confection, which my father still retained in its old position.

"Do you think you could do it?"

Jack was silent.

"Would you try to learn?"

"I learn two things," mumbled Jack, "my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour."

"Not very apposite that," muttered Mr. Postle.

"Not much either way," answered my father; and he resumed the examination.

"Well, Jack, suppose I were to take you into my service, and feed and clothe you—should you like a smart new livery?"

"Yes."

"And a new hat?"

"Yes."

"And if I were to give you a pair of new shoes, would you take care of them?"

"Yes," answered Jack, "and walk in the same all the days of my life."

"There!" said my father, giving Postle a nudge with his elbow; "what do you think of that?"

"A mere random-shot," answered Mr. Postle.

"Not at all," said my father, turning again to his protégé. "Well, Jack, I have a great mind to give you a trial. If I take you into the house, and find you in a good bed, and comfortable meals, and a suit of clothes, and provide for you altogether, would you promise to behave yourself?"

"They did promise and vow three things in my name," answered Jack; "first, that I should renounce the devil and all his works——"

"Yes, yes," cried my father rather hastily, for Postle was grinning. "We know all that. But would you take care of the basket, Jack, and leave the medicine for the neighbours at the right houses, and attend to your duty?"

"My duty towards my neighbour," answered Jack, "is to love him as myself; and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me — Give us the lozenge."

My father gave him the lozenge, which the lad eagerly popped into his mouth, occasionally taking it out again, to look edgeways at its thinness, till all was gone; and then deliberately licked his sweetened hand, beginning at the thumb, and ending with the little finger. My father, who had watched every motion with intense interest, mechanically turned round to the drawer for another "Tolu;" but falling into a fit of musing at the same time, forgot the destination of the lozenge, and eventually clapped it into his own mouth, to the infinite discomfiture of Jack, who by a sudden depression of his features, while his head dropped on his bosom, and his arms fell straight by his sides, typified very vividly the common catastrophe of the Hope going down with all hands.

"Yes, my mind is made up," said my father, awakening from his reverie. "At any rate the unfortunate creature shall have a chance. With a little looking after at first, he will do very well."

Mr. Postle looked earnestly at my father, with an expression which might be translated "What next?"—then up at the ceiling with a shrug which signified "Lord, help us!"—and then performed "Confound it!" by a frantic worrying of his hair, as if it had been wool or flock that required teasing. To remonstrate, he knew, was in vain. My father, in ordinary cases, was not what is called pig-headed; but in matters of feeling, his heart, as Postle said, was "as obstinate as the influenza, which will run its own course." In fact, from that hour "the Idiot" was virtually engaged *vice* Job,—for the parish of course made no objection to the arrangement; and as to the old dame, his guardian, my father found means, never exactly known, to reconcile her to the loss of her charge and the stipend. So the thing being settled, Mr. Postle made the best of it, and endeavoured to initiate his subordinate in his duties: but it was hard work, and accordingly Kezia volunteered her help to convert Jack into our Doctor's Boy.

"To be sure," she said, "his faculties were not over bright, and he would protrude his catechiz at unseasoned times; but he was very willing, and well-disposed, and an orphan besides, and, as such, every woman ought to be his mother." And truly, however she found time for the labour, she turned him out daily so trim and clean, that could she have scoured up his dull mind to the same polish, Jack would have been one of the smartest boys in the parish.

THE SUN AND THE FLOWER.

THERE was a little lovely flower
That in a garden grew ;
The gardener loved it, for it seemed
So beautiful and true ;
To the sun's face it ever turned,
When morning gleamed, when evening burned.

At evening, when the sun was gone,
And all the stars came flocking out,
And the pale moon with quiet face
Moved queenly 'mid the radiant rout,
The gentle flower hung down her head,
All pale and moveless as the dead ;

But met again the bright-eyed sun,
With dewy aspect, charged with weeping ;
Yet soon cleared up her pearly face,
Her master's own dear circuit keeping ;
And ever, as it moved around,
Its green leaves murmured a sweet sound :

Saying, " Master dear, wert thou to leave
The bright depths of that azure sky
To the pale radiance of the stars
And cold wan moonlight, I must die, —
For from thy deep and burning face
I draw my life and light and grace.

" I well remember when the stars
Were happiness enough for me,
And the sweet, quiet, gentle moon, —
But that was ere I looked on thee ;
For I was born when night lay still
On the deep glen and shadowy hill.

"Thy constant gaze I love to meet,
And look into thy fierce, deep eye ;
I know thee, that thou canst not change,
I feel that thou wilt never die ;
But with thine undeclining strength
Wilt gleam upon my grave at length."

"Ah !" said the gardener, "foolish flower,
The sun will never change, nor die ;
But mists may creep, and fogs may lower,
And clouds may intercept the sky :
If thou without his face must fall,
Thy hopes of happiness were small."

He snapped the flower, and smiling said,
"Better to fall before his face,
Than rot amid the nameless things
That crawl below corrupt and base,
Amid dark mists and chilling showers,
And the grey sky's dull sunless hours."

Ah ! Love is like the golden sun,
And Life is like the flower ;
And Death, he is the gardener kind,
That cropped its sweetest hour,
Ere heavenly light, as in my song,
From earthly glooms had suffered wrong.

stol.

W. H. WOOD.

DALLADA THE NEGRESS.

AN INCIDENT IN THE WEST INDIES.

I HAD been about three months in the Spanish West Indies, principally at the Havannah, and, after transacting various business there, had proceeded to the town of Mayaguez, where I waited several days anxiously expecting the arrival of our Charleston agent, who had given me rendezvous there. One of my main objects in coming from England had been to arrange some important business with him on behalf of the Bristol house in which I was a partner. Whilst I was wondering at the delay in his arrival, I one day received a letter from Charleston informing me of his death by fever. This unexpected circumstance considerably embarrassed me, but, after some deliberation, I resolved to proceed to the port of San Juan, where I should be almost certain to find vessels for Charleston, in which place I felt that my presence was now highly necessary, owing to the sudden decease of our confidential agent.

My chief acquaintance at Mayaguez was with a merchant of the name of Buchanan, known amongst his intimates by the elegant *sobriquet* of Bungy, a sharp shrewd little fellow, half Jew half Scotchman, with a dash of the Spaniard, attributable to his long residence in the West Indies. To him I betook me in this emergency, and requested him to tell me of the first ship going round to San Juan, as I was desirous of reaching Charleston without loss of time. To my great annoyance, he informed me that there were no vessels then loading for that destination, and upon my expressing my intention of going by land, he set before me a picture of the perils of such a journey that was by no means encouraging. The road, or rather track, from Mayaguez to San Juan was, according to his account, the most difficult and dangerous in the world. I should have to pass through the defiles of Matalaya, the forests of Zaculoibo, and the swamps of San Jago, all infested by gangs of runaway negroes, and by animals that are there called wolves, but which in reality are the descendants of those dogs that in the earlier days of Spanish rule were used to hunt down the natives. The atmosphere, too, was pestilential, full of *vomito prieto*. He strongly advised me to wait the arrival of a vessel.

"Or else——" added he, after a moment's reflection. "But no, you would not like to take a passage by the Centella?"

"The Centella! What is that?" I inquired.

"The rakish-looking Spanish schooner now in port. She is going to San Juan in a day or two."

"And why should I not like it?" cried I, catching eagerly at a chance of accomplishing my much-wished-for voyage.

"Oh! as to that," he replied, "there are plenty of people who would not hesitate."

"Is the vessel in bad condition?"

"Bad condition!" double coppered and copper-fastened. Not a rope or a block wanting. Like a duck on the water—with the speed of an antelope. And the crew! Santa Virgen! Such thorough tarry breeks."

"What's wrong, then? Are the accommodations bad?"

"Excellent. No vessel of the size has better—if so good."

"Something queer about the captain, perhaps?"

"Not a bit of it. The captain is a good fellow, and a first-rate sailor."

"What objection can you have to the ship, then?" cried I impatiently.

Bungy gave a peculiar whistle, and blinked significantly with his little greenish eyes. A thought struck me.

"It is, perhaps, a privateer—a trifle in the piratical way?" said I.

"No."

"In the devil's name, then, what's the matter with the schooner, and what do you mean by all this mystery?"

Bungy came very close to me, put his little finger into one of my button-holes, and, with a knowing grin, replied,

"The cargo—cargo of ebony."

I must say that this piece of information caused me at first to pull a wry face. There was something disagreeable in the idea of making a voyage on board a slaver.

"Has he got a cargo of that description at present?" said I.

"No, sugar and coffee. He came here to dispose of his African produce. A hundred and twenty negroes of the very best sort. Pure Guinea blood. Sold in no time—four to five hundred dollars a-head. There's a lucky dog for you!"

And the worthy Bungy gave a deep sigh.

"And he is going to San Juan?" said I, reflecting.

"Weights anchor the morning after to-morrow."

"Do you think he will take me with him?"

"I'll answer for that. He is a great *camarada* of mine. We've done business together for more than twenty thousand dollars. You are quite decided to go?"

"Quite so."

"*Bien!* Then come with me to the bull-ring. We are sure to find him there, and I will introduce you to him."

"What is his name?"

"What! Don't you know that? *Angeles del Cielo!* Not known *el Capitan Juan*—Juan Balderaga. Juan el Rey, as they call him!"

Bungy was still wondering at my singular ignorance concerning such a distinguished personage as the slave captain, when we reached the circus. No bull-fight was then going on, the *banderilleros* and *matadores* had temporarily yielded the ground to a travelling manège, the members of which had for some days past been astonishing the population of Mayaguez with their feats of horsemanship. There was

a large audience collected, and the *coup-d'œil* afforded by the circus was exceedingly striking to a European eye. The grave and noble Spanish physiognomies, the broad-leaved sombreros, the ample cloaks falling in wide and graceful folds; the women with their clear brown complexions and glossy black hair, their fiery glances, their coquettish, and sometimes scornful smile. There was much to gaze at and speculate upon, but I had had my fill of such scenes during my stay in Spanish America, and at present I only thought of finding the captain of the Centella. I gazed round the circus expecting to see, leaning against one of the painted pillars that supported the roof of the building, some dark-browed pirate with handsome features, compressed lips, and curled moustache, attired in blue jacket and white trousers, with a Turkish cap on his head, the hilt of a poniard protruding from his red silken sash, a silver whistle hung round his neck, an embroidered shirt collar falling back over his shoulders; something, in short, between Byron's Corsair and a vice-admiral. No such personage could I discover, and I was beginning to think that Juan el Rey was not there, when Bungy touched me on the shoulder.

"There is the captain," said he; "wait here and I will fetch him."

I followed the Scotchman with my eyes, and saw him enter a small side box, in which were seated three ladies; one elderly, the other two young and tolerably pretty. With them was a man apparently forty years of age or more, who might have been the father or uncle of the two girls. He was dressed in a brown coat of no very modern cut, and which had the appearance of having grown lighter in colour from age; his lower man was cased in blue velvet trousers rather white at the seams. On his head he wore an enormous otter-skin cap, and around his neck a huge red handkerchief, tied in a bow, the colour of which contrasted most agreeably with his blue and white shirt. When he removed his cap, I saw that his head was bald at the top, but round the sides and at the back was a thick growth of brown hair; his eyes were grey, the end of his nose red. He was rather stout than thin, no particular symmetry was observable in his conformation, except in his legs, which were beautiful specimens of the curve. Altogether he was the most comical sample of the genus dandy that I had ever encountered. Nothing could be more richly amusing than his assiduous attendance on the ladies; he was perpetually peeling oranges, preparing lemonade, offering them sweetmeats and azucarillos. The youngest, to whom his most particular attentions were devoted, smiled graciously upon him, and seemed to bridle up with exultation at the conquest she had made. Farewell, ye picturesque Corsairs whom my imagination had conjured up! This fortunate squire of dames was no other than Juan el Rey.

A few words were exchanged between Bungy and the slave captain, and then both left the box and came to find me. I thought there would have been no end to the compliments and polite speeches of the renowned Juan, and entertained some fears of his dislocating his spine by the low and repeated bows he made to me. Our conversation lasted some twenty minutes, during which short space, he offered me snuff at least forty times. He willingly agreed to give me a passage,

and for about ten minutes refused to take any payment for it. At last, however, with many regrets that I should insist upon his naming a sum, he was kind enough to ask me about three times the usual passage money. But I was far too anxious to avail myself of the opportunity of his schooner, to make any difficulties, and the bargain was at once struck.

On the morning, and at the hour appointed, I went down to the beach, I was alone, Bungy having been prevented by pressing business from accompanying me thither. I had not been waiting five minutes when the captain joined me, and the sailors began putting his luggage and mine into the boat. The worthy Juan appeared out of spirits; he whistled a melancholy air, and took snuff perpetually, till his whole face was smeared with it. We were just going to step into the boat when we heard a shout, and the next moment two negro women came hurrying down, one of them carrying a guitar, which it appeared the captain had left at the house of Paquita, his mistress. The other negress was a young girl, apparently not more than thirteen years of age, of slender figure, and a delicate, almost sickly appearance. The whole of her dress consisted of a white frock or slip reaching to the knees, and secured round the neck, shoulders, and waist with linen bands, something in the way in which the ancients fastened their sandals about the ankles and legs. Her skin was as black as coal, but not shining, more like unpolished marble; her head rather large in proportion to her body; her hair was less crisped and more glossy than that of her companion, her teeth of a dazzling whiteness, her eyes clear and beautiful, without that yellow tinge in the white, which spoils those of most negroes. She kept her eyes fixed upon the guitar, and appeared breathless from the speed with which she had been running. As the instrument was handed to the captain, she endeavoured to catch hold of it. Juan pushed her gently aside, and began to lecture her in the Creole tongue. She evidently did not listen to him; her wild anxious look followed the guitar from which she appeared so unwilling to part.

I asked the captain what the girl wanted. He told me that at the moment of his departure she had hidden the guitar under a heap of banana leaves, that he had searched for it every where in vain, and that it was only by the greatest good luck that it had been found after he left the house; and that he was not obliged to sail without his Paquitna la Rubia. This was the name he had given to the instrument, after his mistress. It was most laughable to hear his discourse, addressed one while to the negress, then to the guitar, which latter seemed to understand what he said nearly as well as the poor black girl.

"*Pobra!*" he exclaimed. "*Pobra Paquitilla!* And did they bury you, *amiga* — bury you under a pile of filthy leaves? Why did you not cry out for help, *muchacha*? I would have flown to your rescue."

This was to the guitar. Then turning to the girl, he reproached her in a half angry, half comical tone.

"Ah, Dallada! you whom I took for a good girl — you to whom I

have so often given coffee, to think of stealing my Paquita, my treasure, *mi bien, mi corazon!* Do you know that you deserve a whipping, Dallada?"

Dallada remained cowering upon the ground, and following with her eyes each of the captain's movements. When he had brought his complaints and reproaches to a close, she raised her head, and with a little weak wiry voice uttered the words:

"Dallada, tink-a-ting! Dallada, tink-a-ting!"

The captain smiled. "Did you ever see Dallada before?" said he to me.

"Never," replied I.

"Indeed! But you must have heard of the little idiot negress of the Señoras Cardiano? She is the talk of all Mayaguez. I brought her here from the African coast, and made her a present to the Señorita Paquita. Did not you know that? Well, there she is. That is Dallada."

"She is an idiot, then? Poor little thing!" I exclaimed, involuntarily stroking the head of the negro girl. She looked at me with a timid smile: then indicating the guitar with her eyes, she again repeated,

"Dallada, tink-a-ting! Dallada, tink-a-ting!"

"You shall see something," said Juan to me.

He took up the guitar, and began playing the well-known bolero,

"Una Vieja me lo dio,"

with a skill and delicacy that filled me with surprise. I never heard any guitar-playing to compare to that. The sounds seemed to come from a distance—soft, subdued, and yet clear and distinct, like a serenade upon the water. When the music began, Dallada threw herself upon her knees—her eyes sparkling—her mouth half open—her hands folded upon her bosom. She was motionless—all ear, all attention; only from time to time her whole frame seemed to tremble with an overpowering and feverish ecstasy. Once, when the melody appeared about to die away, she stooped down and placed her ear against the ground, as though better to drink in the expiring sounds. This was the only movement she made during the whole time the music lasted.

When Juan had finished, he handed the guitar to one of the sailors, and signed to me to precede him into the boat. As he turned to follow, Dallada sprang lightly and noiselessly past him, and seated herself amongst the sailors.

"Hallo, Dallada!" cried Juan. "*Diabolita*, devil's child, out with you! I can't take you with me."

But the girl did not seem to hear him: all her attention was again riveted on the now silent instrument. She gazed at it with glistening eyes.

"Come out of this!" repeated Juan.

Dallada stretched out her hand towards the guitar, and passed one small jet black finger across the strings, which gave out a loud sound. She smiled with childish delight, showing all her ivory teeth as she

did so, and as soon as the vibration had ceased she clapped her hands joyfully together and again repeated—

“Dallada, tink-a-ting!”

At a wink from the captain, one of the sailors took her in his arms and carried her on shore. They tied her feet with a handkerchief, and the other negress held her hands till the boat was a hundred yards or so from the beach. Then she sprang to her feet and seemed about to rush into the water after us, but the handkerchief prevented her walking, and with outstretched hands she fell to the ground. Juan el Rey burst into a loud laugh.

“Poor Dallada!” said he, sitting down in the stern of the boat, “the Señora Cardiano will have her soundly whipped, I expect.”

The name of Cardiano seemed to revive his regret at leaving Mayaguez, and he remained silent and gloomy during the whole time we took to reach the schooner.

Captain Juan, in spite of the vile traffic in which he was engaged, was unquestionably a good fellow, and a joyous companion to those of his own colour. When I found what capital accommodations and excellent treatment were to be met with on board his vessel I began to think his charge for the passage by no means exorbitant. The schooner “Centella,” or Spark, was of slender and elegant build, and beautifully painted. Every morning the decks were scrubbed and holystoned till one might have eaten one’s dinner off them. The most perfect cleanliness was observed, and the smallest dereliction in this respect on the part of any of the crew was punished with the greatest severity. Five-and-twenty blows with a rope’s end were the least the offender might expect, and that being known, such offences were of rare occurrence. I never in my life drank such wine as at Juan’s table. It was a point of honour with him to have the best of every thing, and he told me tales concerning his cabin stores which would have been incredible, had not the extraordinary quality of the liquor confirmed their truth. There was Madeira that had lain for a hundred years forgotten in the cellar of an Ursuline convent; brandy that had been picked up at sea, in which it had remained so long that the cask was covered with a crust of shell-fish and corals several inches deep. He had a perfect museum of spirituous drinkables, from Highland whisky to Indian arrack. His kitchen being as good as his cellar, we were induced to pass a very fair portion of our time at table, and at sea every thing that kills time is a treasure. Juan’s guitar was also a great resource. He would generally take it up after dinner, and it was real enjoyment to hear him play. I used to turn my back or shut my eyes, so as not to see him, and I had then no difficulty in fancying that the fairest fingers in Andalusia were extracting that sweet music from Paquita’s strings. It would be impossible to imagine a roulade, a trill, or any artistical decoration of which guitar-playing is susceptible, that this infernal slave-dealer had not got at his finger’s ends. He had all the qualities of a virtuoso, would play things which he composed as he went on, and, like most great performers, and many little ones, never played when he was

asked. Over and above these resources, we had a box of dominoes, at which interesting game I am ashamed to confess we used sometimes to play half the day.

We were one day hugging the land pretty closely. There was only just wind enough to fill our sails. I was lounging on deck with the captain, who had been playing heaven knows how many *seguidillas*, *boleros* and *romances*, when I suddenly perceived upon the water, at a tolerably great distance, something like a line of white foam, which drew nearer in a sort of wavy manner, spreading itself out and becoming each moment larger and more important. It looked exactly like a rough chalk line upon a green carpet. I stood up, the better to observe this phenomenon, and after a minute I felt a sharp fine rain beat into my face. The heavens were perfectly clear, and even over the land, the cliffs of which seemed to stand out unusually sharp and distinct, not the slightest cloud obscured the bright clear sky. It just then struck me that upon my previous voyage along this coast the captain of the vessel in which I then was had spoken of the extreme caution to be observed on account of the frequent squalls that came on in the neighbourhood of the island.

"See there!" said I to Juan, who was bending over his guitar, playing indefatigably. He raised his head, slowly and carelessly, without interrupting his occupation; but no sooner did he cast his eyes upon the white and foaming line, which could now be heard as well as seen rapidly approaching, than ejaculating a hasty "*Demonio!*" he sprang to his feet, dropped his guitar, and snatched up a speaking trumpet.

"Luff! luff!" shouted he to the man at the wheel, rushing down as he spoke towards the waist of the schooner. But it was too late. The plashing of the waves was at that instant rendered inaudible by the whistling rushing noise of the hurricane: it grew dark all around us as though a curtain had been suddenly spread between sea and sky, and the waters dashed against us in vast sheets, thin and hissing, like so many sickles cutting the air. The masts cracked and bent before the power of the blast; the ship was thrown completely on its side. There was a short sharp cry—one or more sailors had been swept overboard. By good luck, at the moment the squall reached us, I had caught hold of a rope, which probably saved me from sharing the fate of these unfortunates. Around us all was white with foam,—the sea was boiling like a cauldron. The mainsail had been let fly in time, but the upper sails had disappeared, blown completely out of the rigging. In less than three minutes from the time the squall struck us, it had again passed away, the sky was clear and serene, and the schooner had righted herself, although she still quivered and trembled like a frightened race-horse. The crew seemed at first stupified by the hurricane, and it took a few blows of the rope's end to bring them to their senses, and make them set to work repairing damages, and bending new topsails. At last they got about it, however, and in little more than two hours the worthy Dons were again lying about the decks in their usual lazy manner; while the captain, whose guitar

had been saved by some miracle, was seated on the poop, twang-twang away, and singing a favourite ditty of his, beginning,

“Ventanas por la calle son sospechosas,
Para madres que tienen hijas hermosas” —

He had forgotten the late squall, and seemed perfectly careless of future ones.

On the fourth day after our departure from Mayaguez, we cast anchor before San Juan. My first care was to look out for a passage to the United States, which I was soon able to engage on board the brig “Columbia,” Captain Singer, which was to sail in a day or two for Wilmington, in North Carolina. I passed two uncomfortable nights at San Juan — heat suffocating, and vermin abundant. On the evening of the third day, they came to tell me that the brig would weigh anchor in two hours. I sent my trunks on board, and then betook myself to the lodgings of Captain Juan Balderaga, to bid him farewell. I had been sitting a few minutes with him when we heard an unusual noise of voices in the street. We stepped out upon the balcony to see what was the matter, and perceived through the dusky evening light twelve or fifteen persons, amongst them several sailors of the “Centella” surrounding a girl or woman, of whom we could distinguish nothing but a parti-coloured handkerchief that was bound round her head. Upon hearing Juan’s voice the group divided; and we saw before us, to our inexpressible astonishment, the idiot negress Dallada. How had she possibly managed to find her way through the ravines and forests between Mayaguez and San Juan, and to escape the innumerable perils of such a journey, which I myself had been unwilling to encounter? It seemed incredible that she should have accomplished it, as she undoubtedly must have done, on foot, alone, and unassisted. We were never able to explain the mystery, but nevertheless there she stood, opposite the Captain’s window.

As soon as she caught sight of Juan el Rey she uttered a cry, which she broke off abruptly, as though abashed; the next moment she clapped her hands together, and began to laugh.

“Dallada, tink-a-ting!” cried she, in her almost infantine tones. Juan made a sign to the sailors to bring her up to us, but she resisted, pushing away the men who tried to take her hand, and looking mournfully up at the balcony. “Dallada, tink-a-ting!” repeated she, softly. She seemed quite exhausted, as well she might be, by the exertion and fatigue of the journey, and hardly able to hold herself upright; her eyes, too, were less lively in their expression than at Mayaguez, though they had still the same uncertain wandering glance.

I handed the guitar to the captain. At the very first chords that he struck, she began to tremble with delight; she pressed her emaciated arms against her breast, clasped her little thin hands together, and uttered a low musical laugh, which gradually changed into a sort of mournful hysterical sound. I shall never forget that laugh. There was something inexpressibly affecting in it.

On the other side of the narrow street, and opposite to Juan’s

window, was a house, in front of which was a flight of steps some eight or ten feet high, with a sort of roof of painted boards, supported by thin palm-wood pillars. So soon as Balderaga began to play one of those sweet Spanish airs in which he excelled, Dallada ascended the steps, apparently with a view of hearing and seeing better. She passed her right arm round one of the pillars in order to support herself, and listened with rapt attention. During the few minutes that the music lasted, she remained motionless as a statue, and but for one or two convulsive movements of the throat, one might have thought that she had ceased to breathe. Towards the close of the melody, however, her knees seemed to bend under her, the arm that clasped the pillar relaxed its hold, her head was bowed forwards, while her left arm hung pendent by her side. The music ceased. For a few seconds she remained in the same position; then she quite let go the pillar and fell, or rather slid noiselessly down into the street, her head resting upon the lowest step. We rushed down stairs: when we reached the street we found that two sailors had raised her, and were supporting her in an upright position. I took her hand; it was icy cold. Dallada was dead.



EGG SAUCE.

THE WORLD TO THE SOUL.

BY R. MONCKTON MILNES, ESQ. M.P.

SOUL ! that may'st have been divine,
 Now I claim and take thee mine ;
 Now thy mortal bliss must be
 In thy loyalty to me.

Though thou seemest without stain,
 There is evil in thy grain ;
 Thou hast tasted of the fruit
 Of which Knowledge is the root.

So I must not let thee rest
 Lull'd on Faith's maternal breast ;
 Faith and Fancy mar the plan
 Of the making of a man.

So thy tender heart I bare
 To Ambition's frosty air ;
 So I plunge thee deep in Doubt,
 That thou may'st grow hard and stout.

So I bid the eager Boy
 Sense in every form enjoy ;
 Stinting not the moment's pleasure,
 Save to gain some fuller measure.

Thou wilt lose at last the zest,
 Thou wilt need some higher quest ;
 Then I bid thee rise a Man,
 And I aid thee all I can.

Fix thee on some worthy aim,
 Proving danger, fronting shame ;
 Knowing only friends or foes,
 As they speed thee or oppose :

Trampling with thy rapid feet,
Feelings fond and pleas discreet ;
Only for excuses sue,
In the great things thou canst do.

If what shone afar so grand,
Turn to nothing in thy hand,
On, again—the virtue lies
In the struggle, not the prize ;

Only rest not : failure-curst
Turn to Pleasure at the worst ;
That may calm thy conscience-cry —
Death can give thee peace, not I.

SONNET.

BY THE LATE JOHN KEATS.

LIFE's sea hath been five times at its slow ebb,
Long hours have to and fro let creep the sand,
Since I was tangled in thy beauty's web,
And snared by the ungloving of thy hand.
And yet I never look on midnight sky
But I behold thine eyes' well-remembered light,
I never gaze upon the rose's dye,
But to thy cheek my soul doth take its flight.
I never look on any budding flower,
But my fond ear, in fancy at thy lips
And hearkening for a love sound, doth devour
Its sweets in the wrong sense ; — thou dost eclipse
Other delights with thy remembering,
And sorrow to my darling joys dost bring.

UNCLE TOM IN TROUBLE.

[THE COMMEMORATION CONCLUDED.]

BY SUUM CUIQUE, Esq.

Αἱ, αἱ, γυναικοκρατορίαι. Plut. 9. 26.

CHAPTER I.

"COME, my dear father," said Horatio to Squire Leech, as they quitted the Star Inn, after the unpleasant discovery of the sham baron's real character; "if you intend to go to the University sermon, at St. Mary's, you must not delay. The service begins at eleven, and it is now past ten."

"It is very odd, unaccountably odd," replied the Squire of Colyton Grange, that in these days young men never speak of any thing, or any event, with that accuracy which, as philologists, they ought to observe."

"In what have I betrayed any inaccuracy," inquired Horatio, not a little surprised at his father's testiness.

"You called it 'the University sermon,' at St. Mary's, and it is not the University sermon. The University have nothing to do with it, as a University. It is the Infirmary sermon, and is preached to increase the funds of that most excellent institution, founded by the renowned Dr. Radcliffe."

"But, sir, the Vice-chancellor, and all the Dons, go in procession with the black-beadles, and poker-bearers, and ——"

"Cicero, don't be vulgar. Call men and things by their right names," said Mr. Leech, addressing his younger son, from whom the remark proceeded. "If you had spent as many years as your father has, in the study of natural philosophy, you would not have confounded a beadle with a beetle."

"I have heard both of them confounded pretty heartily, sir,—the former by some of our men, who do not like paying their fees, at degree times, and the latter by our housekeeper, when she has found them committing trespasses in her jars of brown sugar."

"Gently, there, Cicero, my boy," said Uncle Tom. "Your father has mounted his hobby, and he does not like to have his ride spoilt."

"His hobby seems rather inclined to kick, this morning," whispered Cicero, "we must put the strap on."

"The strongest strap that ever was sewed will not keep your father from kicking over the traces, if he has once set to hammering. Just hark!—he's off. I thought so," replied Uncle Tom, in a subdued voice.

Cicero listened, and heard his father indulging in a long harangue, in which he was scolding Horatio, for supposing, for an instant, that

he should go to the Radcliffe Infirmary sermon, until he had fulfilled the principal object of his journey to Oxford, by an introduction, through his friend, the professor of chemistry, to the *veritable* natural philosopher, the Baron Von Inkstandhauser, by whose double he had been so grossly imposed upon, and defrauded of fifty pounds, in addition to having been made the laughing-stock, *ludibrium*, of the whole philosophical world, who would, he doubted not, shortly be furnished with all the particulars of the "new case of soft-headedness," displayed in himself.

Horatio, of course, could do nothing else but consent to the arrangement suggested by his father, and offered to accompany him to the house of the professor of chemistry, at once. But no: that would not do. Leech, *père*, chose to go alone. He would have no one present at their interview; doubtless, as Uncle Tom remarked, *sotto voce*, throwing his queer eye over his right shoulder, at his younger nephew, because he was afraid that in recounting the trick the sham baron had played him, the irresistible ludicrousness of the whole proceeding would produce a loud laugh at his expense.

The point was conceded. A proposition was made that the family should all of them meet at the porch of St. Mary's church, at eleven o'clock; but to that the Squire would not agree. He had made up his mind to pass a philosophical day with the professor of natural philosophy. He would not, however, injure the institution, for whose benefit the sermon was to be preached, by his unavoidable absence from service, but gave Horatio a five-pound note, to put into the plate.

"Well then, sir, you will perhaps attend the morning concert at three o'clock, and dine in our rooms at seven?" said Horatio.

"It is very odd, unaccountably odd, that I am to be dragged every where but where I wish to go," said the Squire. "You know that I have a contempt for music, as a mere mechanical art, without any philosophy in it. Any fool can play on a fiddle or a flute."

"But, sir, all the ladies will be there — all the lionesses," &c., began Cicero.

"Then let them fancy themselves she-bears, and dance to the music," said the Squire.

"Give him his head," said Uncle Tom; "he's off. The only chance is to let him go his own pace, until he pulls up of his own accord."

"But as to dinner, sir?" said Horatio.

"At six precisely, in your rooms. As to a party, I shall bring the professor and the baron with me; and I have a few little things to exhibit, which will afford them all a rational evening. Order the largest table-cloth in college to be in readiness when coffee is announced; and, do you hear, provide some good hock, but none of your wishy-washy claret."

So saying, Squire Leech left the party, and turned off towards the residence of his old friend the professor of chemistry.

"What can he mean by wanting a large table-cloth?" inquired Cicero.

"Probably," said Horatio, "he means to give a supper *en philosophie*, and wishes to prepare it himself?"

"Missed your leap," said Uncle Tom. "He has got a large box full of all sorts of engines, and intends to exhibit some of his queer machinery for the entertainment of his friends to his own satisfaction. He has never been able to assemble a philosophical party at the Grange since he knocked old Lady Grizzelton's wig off, and dislodged her false teeth by administering an over dose of the galvanic fluid."

"Absurd!" said Horatio.

"Quite ridiculous!" said Cicero.

"But not the less true," said Uncle Tom.

"And I am to ask a lot of men to dine, and miss the procession of boats, merely to witness tricks upon an air-pump, or an electrifying machine?" said Horatio.

"Yes, and get known in the 'versity as 'the gallanty show-men' for the remainder of our college existences," said Cicero.

"You've hit it — laid the whip on the right place," said Uncle Tom.

"How?" asked both his nephews.

"He has brought me with him," replied Uncle Tom, winking with his good eye, and looking at the procession, which had just left the schools, with the queer one.

There was not time for any further questioning, as crowds were hastening by them, and thrusting them from the *pavé*, which they had previously kept three abreast — "Curricie fashion, with an outrigger," as Uncle Tom expressed it; so they turned with the press, and sought an entrance into St. Mary's. The church, however, was so full, that they retreated; but in order that one of the finest institutions of which this country can boast might not suffer by their absence from the service in which its merits were brought before the public, and its interests ably advocated, they retired to a neighbouring stationer's, and enclosed the Squire's five-pound note, with its *fac simile*, hitherto the property of Uncle Tom, to the secretary and treasurer of the Infirmary.

Horatio then left his uncle and brother to go and order dinner in his rooms, and secure a party. The former was easily effected, as *Coquus* had laid in a large store of every thing in season; but the latter was a work of some difficulty, as very few men were to be found in their rooms, and those few had engagements of some sort or other, and could not come. Out of his large circle of acquaintances, he could only secure the attendance of half a dozen, and those, unfortunately, the noisiest and most unphilosophical men in our house. His attempt to secure a few quiet out-college men was equally abortive, and for the same reason — they were all engaged, either having parties of their own, or having promised other men to join them. Horatio ordered dinner for twenty, and trusted to chance to fill up his table.

In the mean while Uncle Tom and his other nephew, Cicero, in order to while away the day, took a stroll out of Oxford to see a model farm, which they fancied might give them a few new notions in improving the lands or crops, flocks or herds, when they returned to Colyton Grange.

As they sauntered up Headington Hill, towards the spot whence they expected to add to their stock of agricultural knowledge, a carriage, an open *barouche*, met them, in which was seated a lady, rather past the prime of life, and an elderly gentleman. The box was occupied by a younger man, who, from the family likeness, might have been considered as the brother of the lady within. As the hind wheel was locked to guard against the perils of the descent of so steep a hill as that of the village of Headington, our friends had an opportunity of observing the appearance of the occupants of the *barouche* as it proceeded slowly on its downward way. Cicero stared, rather rudely perhaps, and observed to his uncle that the lady put him in mind of a newly-tiled barn — her hair was so very red, and the gentleman on the box of a turkey-cock in a violent passion — as his whiskers strongly resembled the *wattles* of that very iracund bird. Now Uncle Tom, as I have said, had entertained a strong antipathy to the fair sex, since “the days that he was jilted in, a long time ago.” He never, therefore, looked upon any woman, if he could avoid it, except his sister-in-law and the aged female domestics at the Grange. He smiled, for he could not help it, at his nephew’s odd description of the passing travellers, and winked — but then his eye — the queer one, which was unfortunately next to the carriage — was directed as he fondly thought to the summit of a neighbouring elm tree. That the lady thought differently was evident, for after giving her brother upon the box seat a pretty hard poke with her parasol, she bowed and smiled benevolently at Uncle Tom; and the gentleman with whiskers like a turkey-cock’s *wattles*, lifted his hat. Even the old gentleman, inside, took off his hat when the carriage was nearly out of his sight, as if he had at length understood from the lady that Uncle Tom was an acquaintance of the family.

“Who are your friends?” asked Cicero.

“My friends! — what friends?” said Uncle Tom.

“The lady and the gentlemen who bowed so politely to you from the green *barouche*.”

“Never saw them before in my life; they must be *your* friends, Cicero.”

“Thank you, Uncle, but I had much rather not,” said Cicero; “but it was a mistake doubtless on their parts, only I must say that the lady seemed not only to recognise you herself, but anxious that the bushy individual on the box should do so too.”

“Its very odd, unaccountably odd,” as your father would say; but never mind. The chances are incalculable that we never see them again,” said Uncle Tom, following his nephew over a stile into a field of wheat, upon the merits or demerits of which they commenced descending so earnestly that the vision of the lady in the *barouche* was soon forgotten.

CHAPTER II.

WE must leave them investigating the crops, flocks, herds, and droves of the model farm, and return to Leech, *père*.

The professor of chemistry in those days was one of our men. He

had, however, with his professorship, accepted of a partner for life, and, therefore, could not reside in Christchurch, but had taken a house in a retired part of Oxford. The house was not a desirable residence either from its build or its locality; but it had a large garden, and at the farthest corner of that garden, and at a distance from any other building, a large old fashioned green house, capable of being converted at no great expense, and with perfect safety to the neighbourhood, into a laboratory. He might blow up himself in the course of his experiments, but others were safe. He was a quiet, laborious man, enamoured of his profession, though he never practised as a medical man, and as long as he was permitted to spend his days and the greater part of his nights in the pursuit of that interesting branch of his profession, chemistry, he was a happier individual than many, indeed any, who have no resource but in the pleasures of life, and in what is called "society."

To the abode of his old college friend Squire Leech walked hastily. He knocked at the outer gates, and upon inquiring of the servant if Doctor Phosphorus was at home, the domestic replied, "No." There was a something, however, a kind of *suppressio veri*, in the manner in which this "no" was uttered, that induced the Squire to make further inquiries, and to state his case, thus: "I am sorry the Doctor is not at home, for I have come up from the country on purpose to see him; he is an old college friend, and I am sure he will be vexed when he finds that I have come up on purpose to see him, and been disappointed."

As he uttered these words, he put his hands into his waistcoat-pockets and made a jingling noise like the rattling of silver or gold, and then looked the servant hard in the face.

Jonathan hemmed thrice, walked a little way from the gate into the garden, and as the Squire followed, pointed to the former greenhouse, and hemmed again. As he did so, he inadvertently, of course, turned round to shut the gate with his right-hand, and his left was placed behind him with the palm extended; into that open palm the Squire dropped a crown-piece, and the fingers closed upon it convulsively; although the person to whom the palm belonged took no further notice of any thing, but having fastened the gate, walked quietly up to the house. The door of the laboratory—the whilome greenhouse, stood invitingly open. Mr. Leech did not give any masonic signal, but entered. The place was darkened—artificially darkened—for an experiment was being tried, which was not calculated for the "eye of day." It was a something or other in the combustible department of the *ars chymica*. His approach was not observed by the two persons, one the Professor, the other a stranger, who were busily engaged in stirring the materials for the experiment, in a huge crucible, until he called out "Phosphorus, my old friend, I am delighted to find you."

"Keep stirring for your life," said Phosphorus, *continuetur agitatio*. Leech, Jupiter Leech, I am glad to see you."

After a very few brief inquiries into each other's welfare, during which the Professor was continually turning round to watch the pro-

gress of the composition in the crucible, and saying half audibly, "If he should but stop stirring for one moment!" The Squire explained the object of his coming up to Oxford, namely, to be introduced to the great natural philosopher, the Baron Von Inkstandhausen.

"That's the man," said the Professor. "It is a great honour for so humble an individual as myself to entertain him in my house, and have his able assistance at a most interesting, but rather dangerous experiment. We are on the nature of combustibles, and if he was to cease stirring that crucible but for one minute—bah! we should be gone; never seen again."

"And is that the great man—the Inkstandhausen?" asked the Squire. "Pray introduce me to him."

"Not for worlds *now*," said the professor.

The Baron, however, had heard his name quoted, and when he looked up and saw a gentlemanly person talking with Doctor Phosphorous, he relinquished his stir-about, and advanced to meet him.

"Don't stir—but, stir, stir, stir," shouted Doctor Phosphorus, but too late. Before the baron could grasp the extended hand of the Squire, "phiz, whiz, spurt, bang." The roof was blown off the building, and the trio, luckily unhurt, rose from the ground, begrimed with smoke, ashes, and dust.

"I told you how it would be," said Doctor Phosphorus; "I begged of you not to stir, but to keep on stirring, and you did stir instead of keeping stirring, and you see the consequences: allow me to introduce you to my friend Mr. Leech, of Colyton Grange, in ——"

"Bang!" went something else; and then several little diminutive "banga," followed, at which the Baron, although he had been nearly knocked down again, clapped his hands with delight, and screamed, rather than said, "*J'avais raison—J'avais raison—him explode twice as vonce.*"

The professor of chemistry was vexed to think that he had been beaten by a foreigner, but could not but allow the fact; so to hide his vexation, he employed himself in rubbing down the clothes of the Squire, which were covered with a liquid, which had spurted from the exploded crucible. He then rubbed the Baron down likewise, and last of all himself.

As the little bangs continued, much to the Baron's joy, who kept dancing about and clapping his hands, the Squire, whose zeal for science, though considerable, was not so great as to induce him to sacrifice life or limb in its service, made his escape from the laboratory, and was shortly followed by his friend and the Baron, to whom he was again introduced in due form.

It was rather amusing to see the Baron and the chemical professor each holding the country gentleman and amateur philosopher by a coat button; and with their very black faces close to his smoked visage, endeavouring to enlighten him on the subject of the experiment which had just noisily reported the success of the Baron's theory. So earnest were they in impressing the whys and wherefores of their views upon the subject that they did not observe Jonathan, whom the noise of the explosion had summoned from the house, until he exclaimed "*Here's a mettimurphisy!—here's a transmigration!*"

His master looked angrily at Jonathan, and demanded what he meant by interrupting him in the middle of a learned discussion.

Jonathan, instead of replying respectfully as a judicious servant would have done, burst out laughing, and pointed with his finger first at the Squire, then at the Baron, and, lastly, at his master. This, of course, induced the parties pointed at to examine each other, and then themselves. Imagine their horror and amazement. The Squire, who was dressed as few old English gentlemen were wont to dress of yore, in a blue coat, buff waistcoat, drab sit-upons, and grey silk stockings, saw his blue coat covered with large red spots, his buff vest converted into a dingy brown, his drabs into a sort of yellowy pink, and his greys turned into dappled greys, the very colour of his own carriage horses. The Baron and the Professor, who had been dressed in black, now presented the appearance of Zamiels, as that character is dressed in the Freischutz. The influence of the nitrous fumes had turned the black to a deep but brilliant red !

Jonathan could not give up laughing, although he tried very hard to do so. The Squire tried to join in the laugh, but could not. The Professor was very angry, and harangued his servant on the impropriety of his proceedings ; but the Baron taking a huge pinch of snuff, coolly observed, "*They vos vare goot acids.*"

What was to be done ? The Squire could not walk down to his lodgings to change his dress—the boys would have followed him, huzzaed at him, and probably pelted him, or else have taken him for Mr. Moon, the conjurer. His friend could not supply him with a change by way of loan, for he was a very little thin man, and the Squire tall and stout. As to the Baron, he was located at the Professor's, and of course had only to seek his room and resort to his portmanteau. Jonathan relieved his master's anxiety, by suggesting that a carriage should be procured to convey the Squire to his lodgings. While he was gone to procure it, the Squire's black beaver broad brim began to feel the effects of the nitric and sulphuric acids, and turned as red as his coat. The Baron suggested the propriety of trying whether an alkali would not neutralise the effect of the acids, and restore the hat to its original nigerity ; but before he and his friend the Professor could agree whether soda or potass was the more compatible alkali to be used, the Star chariot drove up to the gate, and the Squire having secured the company of the Baron and his friend the professor of chemistry at dinner, sprang into it, and sat back as far as he could.

He attracted but little attention until the chariot arrived in the High Street, where its further progress was impeded by a string of vehicles that were waiting to take up their respective burdens as soon as the sermon in aid of the Infirmary funds was over : forgetting the "*mettimurphisy*," and the oddness of his appearance, the Squire let down the windows, and thrust his head out to ascertain the cause of the obstruction. The stoppage unluckily happened just before the door of a celebrated, and justly celebrated, pastry-cook's shop. Now, the shop was full of men who preferred pastry to preaching, and who were cooling the ardour excited by overnight stimu-

lants and breakfast devilries, and a June sun, with a series of fresh fruit-ices

"What a quiz," said one.

"*Quis est?*" inquired another.

"The Pope of Rome, for a penny," said a third.

"I'll bet two to one he's a cardinal, twig his red hat," said a fourth.

"I'll take it, said a fifth, he's something military, in a new regulation hat."

Several other characters were named, and bets booked to a considerable amount upon the Squire's being somebody or other; but the heaviest were in favour of his being a foreign ambassador, or the leader of the quadrille band, come down from London to play at the Star ball.

"Here, Horse-leech," cried one of the young men. "Come here a minute, if you can leave flirting with Betsey, and just give us your notion of who and what that very queer character is in the coach."

"He's the pope."

"He's a cardinal."

"He's a foreign count."

"Only a musician—a mere fiddler."

"For another pony—I name him—He's the ambassador from the Red Sea."

"Who is he, Leech," said all at once.

"He is my governor," said Horatio; "but what he has been metamorphosing himself for in that very extraordinary way I cannot conceive."

"Is he a deputy-lieutenant for Northamptonshire?" asked one man.

"Certainly," replied Horace.

"Then rely upon it that is the new dress for the character, and I win three ponies, for it's military."

The Squire, who had been abusing the driver for not getting on, suddenly found himself the centre of attraction to a large crowd, and recollecting the queerness of his appearance popped back into his corner and endeavoured to hide himself by pulling up the glasses. It was too late, however; a rumour had pervaded the multitude that the chariot contained some great man, and every one was resolved to have a peep at him. When the chariot moved on, which it did as soon as Horatio had jumped upon the box and bidden the driver turn round and go by Oriel Lane, and so through Blue Boar Lane, to the lodgings in St. Aldate's, a large crowd followed it which grew gradually larger; and when the Squire alighted and rushed up to his rooms, he was saluted by loud cries of "Window! window! show yourself at the window," which, of course, he would not do, and so the house was closely beset for the rest of the day, although Horatio explained to some of the people that the occupier of the boot-maker's lodgings was only a country gentleman who had met with an accident which had discoloured his dress.

The Squire would have been very angry, but his wrath was appeased by the thought that his annoyances had been caused in the pursuits of science, and in the presence of the greatest natural philosopher of the age.

CHAPTER III.

WE must leave the Squire to change his dress, and procure another road-brimmed beaver, while we return to the agriculturists, Uncle Tom and Cicero. They were quite wearied out by walking over the model farm under a strong June sun, and sauntered back slowly to Oxford. Cicero having a friend or two at Maudlen, called upon them in order to introduce his uncle to the very excellent tap of beer in the uttery, which after so long a walk on so hot a day proved very greeable. What was to be done until dinner time? "Go and look at the horses in the different stables," suggested Uncle Tom. Cicero assured him that the attempt would be unsuccessful; as, though they could find the stables, they would not find the horses, which would be sure to be engaged in carrying men, in attendance on their strangers, to Blenheim, Nuneham, and other spots, which are always visited at Commemoration time.

"Well; what do you say to a row on the water?" inquired Uncle Tom.

"Do you pull?" asked Cicero.

Uncle Tom "never had pulled, but he would try his best."

Cicero begged to decline; he had much rather not be laughed at, as he certainly would have been had he been seen by anybody, being skiffed by an elderly gentleman who would catch crabs every other stroke; and as for pulling the same elderly gentleman down to Iffley in a broiling sun, it was much too good a thing to be attempted.

His Maudlen friend said that he was going to the morning concert at the theatre, and advised Cicero and his uncle to join him.

Neither Uncle Tom nor Cicero had ears for music; but as there was really nothing else to be done, and they were sure of seeing the lionesses, they agreed to go, for it was an undress concert, and they could leave the theatre whenever they felt tired.

When they arrived at the theatre it was already nearly filled, and with difficulty they got seats at last in the under-graduate's gallery, which corresponds with the one-shilling gallery at other theatres, being quite as highly placed, but a little more respectable, and by far the best spot for hearing the music, and commanding a view of the company.

They had not been seated many minutes, and the overture had just commenced, when a gentleman in fierce red whiskers entered the gallery, having on his arm a lady with a highly-freckled face, gracefully and partially shaded with ringlets of a deep red-tiled hue. They found their way to the only vacant seats, which brought the lady in juxtaposition to Uncle Tom, on his right-hand side. He threw the unfortunate eye over his right shoulder, just took a glimpse—a shuddering glimpse at his neighbour—and then, as he forcibly believed, fixed it upon the orchestra. He had, in reality, no control over the muscles of that optic, and the lady, believing it to be firmly fixed upon her, first of all smiled, simpered, and bowed repeatedly, then grew very red, and

looked very angry, and at last appealed to the gentleman who sat by her side—who looked very hard at Uncle Tom, said, “By the powers! only jist let him continue that same.”

“I say, uncle,” whispered Cicero, “you are in luck; don’t you know the lady who is sitting next to you?”

“I really had much rather not,” said Uncle Tom. “Change places, will you?”

“No, no; sit still. I am sure that is the very lady who bowed to you on Headington Hill; and if you don’t or wren’t know her, she evidently does or will know you. She is bowing at you as hard as she can, and, by Jove, blushing too. Come, come, uncle, acknowledge her as an early flame.”

“Never saw her in my life, upon my honour and word, and never wish to see her again,” said Uncle Tom. “Pheugh!—how hot it is—let us go out.”

“Nonsense!—Now we are here, uncle, let us hear a shilling’s worth or two, out of our half-sovereigns,” said Cicero.

“I would rather pay a ten-pound note than be where I am.—Pheugh—it is positively unbearable,” said Uncle Tom, standing up and snorting with heat and annoyance.

“Down in front!—down!—hush!—silence!—down!—sit down!” said several voices.

Uncle Tom felt inclined to be quarrelsome, and resist the order; but Cicero, by a gentle haul of the tails of his coat, brought him down to his seat.

He had not sat many minutes, with his eyes, as he thought, firmly fixed upon a syren, who was warbling forth an Italian bravura, when he felt the lady next to him rise from her seat. He just cast a glance at her, and found she was looking exceedingly red and angry, and exchanged seats with her companion.

He felt much relieved, and thought that the thermometer must have sunk at least an inch. He was so much cooler, that he doubled his arms over his chest, and began to enjoy the music and the scene around him.

He had not sat very long, however, when he felt his left hand, which was under his right arm, touched with something which felt like pasteboard, and a voice whispered in his ear, “I’ll trouble you for yours.”

“My what?” said Uncle Tom, looking round.

“Whist! the lady, my sister, will hear, and spoil sport. Just rade my card, and favour me with a rade of yours in return,” whispered the stranger.

Uncle Tom, very much surprised at, and unable to account for, so strange a proceeding, looked at the card in his hand and read “Lieutenant O’Brady, Brady Castle, Cove of Cork,” and below the engraving, in pencil writing, “Mitre Inn, High Street.

“I’ll be hanged if the fellow ain’t mad,” said Uncle Tom, throwing the card upon the ground, and scrambling through the company, over the back seats, bidding Cicero follow him, amidst loud cries of “Si-

lence ! silence !” and a distinct whisper from the gentleman in fiery whiskers, “ We’ll contrive to meet again any how.”

As soon as Uncle Tom had arrived at the top of the staircase, he rushed down the steps, and did not stop until he found himself in the centre of the Schools’ Quadrangle. Cicero hurried after him, as quickly as he could, and demanded the reason of his quitting the concert, in so hasty a manner.

Uncle Tom could only say that he did not choose to sit next to a madman, who had taken some extraordinary antipathy to him, and wished to provoke him to fight a duel.

“ What did he say, then ?” asked Cicero.

“ Oh ! something about the lady his sister, and then begged me to *rade* his card, and favour him with a *rade* of mine in return,” said Uncle Tom.

“ Rely upon it,” said Cicero, “ the lady is an old flame of yours, and wishes to renew the acquaintance. What did you do or say to her to make her change her seat ? eh !”

“ I neither spoke to, looked at, nor touched her,” said Uncle Tom. “ Rely upon it, Lieutenant Brady of Brady Castle is mad, and the madness runs in the family.”

“ Where does he put up ? You really ought to call on the lady,” said Cicero.

“ I’ll be hanged if I do ; so say no more about it ; and as for Mr. O’Brady—I’ll wring his red nose out of his ugly face if he dares to speak to me again. So say no more about it, I repeat, unless you wish to offend me,” said Uncle Tom, looking so seriously angry that Cicero saw it would not do to carry the joke any farther.

They walked slowly down the Purl into the High Street, which looked, as it was, deserted, and sought their lodgings, where they found the Squire ready dressed for dinner, but dabbing his face, which looked very much inflamed, with a damp towel. The fact was, the fumes or steams of the acids which had discharged, or rather commuted, the colour of his clothes had also affected his skin, upon which they acted as a caustic, and caused a very unpleasant sensation of burning. He bore it as philosophically as a philosopher could do with the thermometer at 85° in the shade, until Horatio explained the cause of his misfortune, and exhibited the damaged articles of dress. Then Uncle Tom and Cicero laughed so immoderately that Horatio was forced to join them long before he had completed the story of the ride home from the Professor’s in the Star chariot.

The Squire grew very angry, and might possibly have quarrelled with his brother and his sons, had not Cicero amused him, and driven away his anger by relating the adventure of Uncle Tom with the Irish gentleman, whom he would persevere in denominating a lunatic. This turned the tables upon Uncle Tom, and served to amuse the party until the rattling of carriages proclaimed that the concert was over, the visitors of Blenheim and Nuneham returning from their excursions, and, consequently, that dinner-time was approaching.

CHAPTER IV.

THE table was laid for twenty, but besides themselves, and the Professor, and the Baron, only five young men came to dinner. It passed off rather heavily, for Uncle Tom was out of humour, and the Squire and his brother philosophers talked too scientifically for the rest of the party to understand them. Even the hock, good as it was, and well iced, failed to raise the spirits of the younger guests, and when the strong full-bodied port made its appearance instead of some cool claret, which had been forbidden by the Squire, they first of all looked at one another, then telegraphed in a peculiar way, and finally withdrew from the room, under some paltry excuse or other, congratulating each other on having escaped from the port, and the fever consequent to such fiery fluids.

As the Squire was deep in abstruse subjects with his elder guests, and Uncle Tom did not seem to relish their talk or his wine, the young men proposed to him to go into Christchurch meadow, and see the procession of boats with which the term generally ends. He gave a ready assent, for he was sick of oxygen and hydrogen from the Professor and long dissertations upon mammalia and other classes of animals, in shocking bad English, from the Baron, mixed with a little twaddle upon every thing that he deemed philosophical from the Squire.

The fresh air of the meadows seemed to revive him, and he regretted that they had given a promise to his brother to return early and witness a few interesting experiments upon various subjects, for exhibiting which he had brought up his apparatus. Horatio and his brother were enjoined not to be late, and to invite all the young men whom they could find disengaged to view the experiments.

"You will not, of course?" said Uncle Tom.

"Of course not: but if I did, rely upon it, none of them would come if they were invited. There will be a ball at the Star, after the boats; and, rely upon it, the ball will have more attractions for the men than an electrifying machine, an air-pump, or a magic lantern," said Horatio.

"Ay, and strong hot port instead of iced champagne, or cold claret," said Cicero.

"Here we are in the meadow," said Horatio. "What a crowd! I'll tell you what we will do. I have got my skiff at Mother Hall's. We will get into her and row down to the mouth of the Cherwell, where we shall see every thing without being annoyed by the crowd."

After, with difficulty, squeezing their way through the thousands who thronged the gravel-walk leading down to the river, they made three of about twenty-five in a punt, and were, wonderful to say, poled across in safety to the spot where the skiff lay. It took Horatio nearly half an hour to wheedle and coax his little boat through the punts and other craft that crowded the river. At length, after many strong remarks from Uncle Tom and Cicero, and some very bad language from

the polers of the punts, mingled with threats of throwing them into the river, they forced their way through the last course of punts, and gained the spot where Horatio intended to take up his position, as one most favourable for viewing the procession in comfort and security.

Several other boats had been placed by their owners in the same spot, but still there was room for Horatio's skiff alongside a wherry, rowed by a waterman, and having its stern covered with a nice white awning, edged with scarlet ribands. Slowly and skilfully the skiff was laid alongside, and its chain made fast to the root of an overhanging willow-tree. Uncle Tom and Cicero, after watching with some curiosity the *modus operandi* adopted by Horatio in settling their little bark, turned round in their seats so as to face the river. This manœuvre gave them a full view of the parties who were seated beneath the awning of the wherry by their side. Uncle Tom felt inclined to faint, and Cicero to burst out laughing, when they saw Lieutenant O'Brady, his sister, and the old gentleman who had been seated by her side as the carriage slid down Headington Hill. Yes, there they were all three, sipping what seemed to be claret, and eating from a dish of delicious-looking Wytham strawberries.

Uncle Tom would have begged Horatio to loose his skiff and move off somewhere else, but it was too late; three four-oared boats and an eight-oared had laid themselves across their stern, and hemmed them in. To get on shore was impossible, for the willow which impended over them grew in such manner from a deep swampy place near the bank, that it was not practical to effect a landing without getting up to one's neck in water and mud.

"By the powers—Florence dear! but that's cool—see there; that's the very same man, with his eye out of the horizontal, that stared at ye so as ye came into the town, and again when ye was in the concert-house," said the lieutenant, pointing with his wine-glass to Uncle Tom, and advancing it so near his nose that he actually sniffed the *bouquet* of the Lafitte.

"Oh! protect me from the creature!" shrieked Florence. "He's looking at me now."

Uncle Tom was doing no such thing. As he thought, he was looking down the river with his good eye, entirely forgetting that the other, over whose muscles, as I have said, he had no command, was, or rather appeared to be, firmly fixed on the fiery locks of the lady in the wherry.

"Terence dear!" said the lady, "ask the gentleman civilly just to look another way."

"Gentleman!" said the brother, eyeing Uncle Tom contemptuously. "You said gentleman by mistake. I'll not ask him any thing; but if he don't remove his ugly eye I'll ——"

"What, sir!" said Uncle Tom, jumping up in the little skiff, and causing her and her neighbour the wherry to sway about so that Uncle Tom, all unused to balance himself in a little boat, was obliged to hang on to the awning of the wherry to steady himself. This gave an additional sway to the wherry, and caused the old gentleman to topple over, head over heels, into the stern, the lieutenant to lurch

forward and upset the little table with its contents, fruit, wine, and glasses, and Miss Florence to grasp at the table to save herself from falling upon her brother. To say that this was accompanied by screams and shrieks—so loud as to call the attention of every one near them—is needless. The lieutenant swore most loudly and wickedly; the fair Florence screamed incessantly; and the old gentleman, on his back in the stern, bellowed murder, and groaned, by turns, assuring every body that he was killed entirely.

Uncle Tom was so frightened at the mischief he had involuntarily caused, that he, in his agitation, held on to the awning, and so increased the sway of both the boats, that he had very nearly upset the little skiff. As it was, she shipped sufficient water to wet him over his ankles, and to make Horatio and Cicero believe that she would fill and go down. They therefore seized Uncle Tom by his coat-tails, and dragged him down upon his seat, where he sat holding on, and looking the hateful lady in the face.

"Oh! Terence dear! that eye again! I cannot bear it. Oh, oh, take me away—I shall faint, I know I shall!" screamed Miss Florence O'Brady; and to shut out the dreaded vision she covered her eyes with her handkerchief, quite ignorant of the fact that it held in its folds the contents of the dish of strawberries. In her convulsive efforts to rid herself of the sight of Uncle Tom's offensive eye, she gave the cambric so hard a squeeze that the ripe fruit was smashed to a pulp, and the juice ran through all over her face, hands, and silk dress; and when she removed the handkerchief to see if the evil eye was still upon her, she presented such a frightful appearance that Uncle Tom shuddered, and Horatio and Cicero burst out into a loud laugh, in which they were joined by every one of the crowd who could see the cause of it.

"Just wait till I reseat my venerable uncle," said the lieutenant, hauling at the arms of the aged individual who was so awkwardly jammed in that he would not have regained his seat had it not been for the help of Cicero, who stepped into the wherry and assisted in restoring him to his perpendicular.

"Thank ye for that same, young gentleman!" said Mr. Terence O'Brady. "And now stand aside, for I don't wish to harm *you*—but here's for the old boy, at any rate!"

So saying, he took up a claret bottle by the neck, and hurled it at Uncle Tom's head, saying, "Take that!" Cicero caught his arm just in time to divert the course of the bottle, which came in full force upon the expansive chest of Joe Barns, the waterman, who had hitherto been sitting in the bow of the wherry grinning at the fun. He fell under the blow, and lay as if his breath had been beaten out of his body.

Horatio and Uncle Tom sprung into the wherry to help Cicero, who was wrestling with the lieutenant, and trying to prevent him from seizing another bottle, which lay conveniently within his reach. In the scramble that ensued Uncle Tom felt a powerful pair of arms round his neck, and, upon looking round to see who his assailant was, he saw the strawberry-tinted face and the red ringlets of Miss Florence within an inch of his nose. He shuddered, he groaned, he

entreated of her to release him, but she would not. "She knew he meant to murder Terence dear, and she'd prevent it;" so, clinging tighter and tighter to him, she fairly brought him down upon the seat by her side, and there held him firmly, but convulsively. The old gentleman, who had hitherto taken no part in the affray, seeing Uncle Tom's head exposed—for his hat had fallen overboard in the struggle—seized a dessert-dish in both his hands, and gave him so severe a blow upon his bald pate that the china was broken into fragments, and a hollow groan escaped from the recipient of the blow as he fell into the bottom of the wherry.

Miss Florence cast one glance upon the man against whom she had formed so great and unaccountable an antipathy; and when she saw the blood trickling in small streams from his glossy pericranium, uttered a howl—a specimen of her country's powers in wailing, and sunk down in a swoon by Uncle Tom's side.

To describe the scene that ensued is impossible: suffice it to say, that Joe Barns seized Uncle Tom's hat, which was full of water, and threw the contents over the lady's face, and brought her to herself. He then took his handkerchief, and having wetted it, wiped the blood off Uncle Tom's head, who sat upright, looking quite bewildered, and begging to know what was the matter. The old gentleman, who thought he had murdered the other old gentleman, was making ten thousand apologies, some in English, but the greater number in Irish; and the lieutenant—"Terence dear!"—was standing looking on, nearly choked by the knuckles of Horatio and Cicero, who held him tightly grasped by his neckcloth. The by-standers and sitters were shouting "Shame! shame! Go it! At him again!" and such other cries as their different ideas of the struggle before them suggested, when a cry of "The boats! the boats! Here they come!" withdrew their attention from the combatants.

A stormy explanation ensued, in which it appeared that the O'Bradys, on their first visit to England, resolved to see the sights at Oxford during the Commemoration; that Miss Florence, in descending Headington Hill, had fancied that Uncle Tom, who was, without knowing or meaning it, staring very hard at her, was an old friend, whom she ought to recognise; that afterwards, at the concert, finding him a perfect stranger, and not the man she had taken him for, she believed that his continuing to gaze at her in a peculiar manner over his right shoulder was meant purposely to insult her. — *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.*

The matter was satisfactorily explained, apologies given and received, and the belligerents might have passed a quiet hour together over the claret that still remained basketted, had not Miss Florence O'Brady, in order perhaps to atone for her former unkind thoughts of Uncle Tom, shown such tender ways towards him as alarmed him, and made him urge his nephews to an immediate departure.

Joe Barns put them on shore in the meadow; and, while the crowd on the banks were shouting loudly in honour of the procession which was approaching the barge, Uncle Tom, with his wet hat over his still-bleeding head, hurried into "our house," to recount his woes to his brother and the natural philosophers.

Alas! instead of finding the Baron, the professor of chemistry, and Leech, *père*, over their wine, or getting the apparatus in order to astonish the young men with certain experiments, they found the Baron and the Professor absent, and the Squire walking about the room in an unhappy and most agitated state of mind and body. The box in which the apparatus had travelled was not even uncovered, and the nice clean table-cloth, that was to have been nailed to the walls to form a surface for the reception of the figures of the magic lantern and microscope, was not even unfolded.

"Where is the Baron Von Inkstandhausen?" asked Horatio.

"And your old college friend, Dr. Phosphorus?" inquired Cicero.

"Where are the natural philosophers?" said Uncle Tom.

"*Abierunt, eruperunt, evaserunt*—gone, off—quitted. We have had a quarrel."

"So have I, rather than not," said Uncle Tom, taking off his wet beaver and displaying his abraded skull to his astonished brother. "But it is all right now; only that Irish fiend, the *she* one, I mean, was a little too loving—curse her!"

"What have *you* quarrelled about?" asked the young men of their father, after they had explained their own adventures to him.

"Oh! on a mere trifle. That infernal baron, after drinking nearly three bottles of port, would assert, and that brute Phosphorus backed him in it, that light was a material substance, and could be weighed like any thing else. I denied the fact, and then we got to high words; and I called Phosphorus a fool and the Baron a —, hang me if I recollect what—but they both went off, and I believe not quite sober—but, however, I say nothing, only may I be blown up again in Phosphorus's laboratory if I stay in Oxford to see that German brute dishonour the University by being presented with an honorary degree. No—I'll leave Oxford this very night, or at any rate early next morning."

Uncle Tom readily agreed to the arrangement, as he thought it better to get out of the way of the fair Florence O'Brady, lest, in her zeal to recompense him for her ungenerous allusions to his defective eye, she might propose to marry him.

So Squire Leech and he departed for Colyton Grange early on the ensuing morning, without waiting to see THE COMMEMORATION CONCLUDED.



THE HUSK AND THE GRAIN.

WEEP! woman, weep! drop thy tears of agony,
 He whom thou mournest, lieth dead and cold;
 Heave! woman, heave! the sigh that never cooleth,
 Born of the misery that never waxeth old.

He, who at morning cheered and sustained thee,
 With sweet words and tender, tender and sweet,
 'Till earth, with her troubles, looked fairer than heaven,
 Lies with the worms there—under thy feet.

Crawling they suck the lips that gave thee pleasure,
 Cruelly they pierce the eyes of love and light,
 Feast on the neck, on which thou lay'st enraptured,
 Sweetly entranced through all the hours of night.

Rigid is the tongue on which thy soul lingered,
 Livid is the hand, once how delicate and fair!
 Pulseless the heart; and colder than the damp-drops
 Eating the gold in his bright yellow hair.

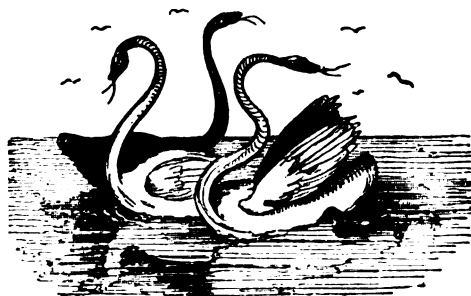
Weep! woman, weep! drop thy tears of agony,
 He whom thou mournest, lieth dead and cold;
 Heave! woman, heave! the sigh that never cooleth,
 Born of the misery that never waxeth old.

Hush! widow, hush! stay thy tears of agony,
 He whom thou mournest never touched the sod;
 Raise! widow, raise! the eye of faith and gladness,—
 Behold, thou poor heart, the gentleness of God!

He, who at evening sitting beside thee,
 Opened the Book of wisdom and of love,
 Soothingly enjoined thee to lean upon its promises,
 Trusts to thee now in a calmer world above.

Brighter than stars is the light that pervades him,
Sweeter than perfume his free and happy breath,
Purer than chastity the thoughts that engage him,
Loosened from the earth by the iron hand of death.

Angels have asked to be his dear companion,
Still thou must have his watchfulness and care,
Go where thou wilt, he shall follow and uphold thee,
Hovering about thee—A Spirit of the Air!



SWANS OF THE SERPENTINE.

SEA-SIDE LORE.

GATHERED BY THE MOUNTAINEER.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

A NIGHT UPON THE SANDBANK. — THE CHASE AFTER
THE BRIDEGROOM.

NEAR the mouth of the Elbe, between *Cuxhaven* and *Marne*, sailed a solitary boat. The sun sank glowingly into the neighbouring and slightly disturbed ocean. The lamps were already kindled in the lighthouses of *Cuxhaven* and *Neuwerk*. He who had charge of the boat was an old man with snow-white hair, which the fresh breeze blew about a face hardened in its age by wind and weather. The old man tacked, with the view of sailing for land.

"Oh, not so soon!" exclaimed one of two maidens, who, with their brother, were passengers on the occasion, "not so soon, Father Möns! Pray put about again. Look at those beautiful waves; let us dance over them a little longer."

"Nay, my young lass," answered the grey-haired one, "we must get home. Night will soon overtake us; the wind is unsteady, and the sea is getting up."

"Well, but dear Father Möns," continued Louisa, still entreating, and patting the formidable face of the old pilot with her small soft hand, "just one wave or two! This surely cannot make a difference. And I enjoy nothing in the world more. I love to be riding upon the back of the billows, and to be well sprinkled with the silvery foam of old Neptune. Come, good Möns, let us about ship again!"

"About sail, boy!" cried the pilot to a lad, his only helper. "It was always hard to me to refuse a pretty girl any thing. Mind now, south-east by south; we must keep her close to the wind."

The boat flew whizzing towards the eager-pressing waves, whilst drizzling spray dashed over it. The maidens laughed, shouted, and screamed in their delight, and it was not long before they were wet through from their briny bath. Möns laughed as heartily as any. He suffered wave after wave to dash against his little shell, and did not think again of returning until the girls themselves, soaked through and through, acknowledged they had had enough, and earnestly implored him to give over.

"Oh, I am satisfied if you are," said Möns, slyly. "Let her go

round, William. Indeed, we have little time to lose. It has begun to ebb already, and the wind is going down. Bring her close up, boy: let us get off the current. Devil take me if we are not driving on to Neuwerk! What do you see, William?"

"The boat is drifting," said the young man, gloomily.

"Drifting!" cried Möns, "with the wind in her canvass!" He leaned over the side of the vessel, and seemed to strain his eyes in watching the motion of the dark yellow waves. "As I am a living sinner," he exclaimed, "the boat drifts!" He took off his cap, laid the rudder down as if in despair, and clasped his aged hands.

"What is the matter?" asked Theodore.

"Matter?" replied old Möns; "if you have faith and trust in God, pray to Him for help, young gentleman—pray for those young and pretty children there. The ebb-tide has caught us—the wind has gone down. If a breeze springs up, it will be southerly, or south-west, as sure as I now speak. There's no exertion of man that can avail us here. Help can come from Heaven alone!"

The poor girls, who, a few minutes before, were even extravagant in their joyousness, were paralysed by the words of the old pilot. Instinct took them into each other's arms, where they remained, clinging and trembling with alarm. Theodore attempted to give them courage, and protected them, as well as he could, with his large cloak, from the bitter air; for the night, though serene, was very cold. Upon the sea lay the stillness of death—the barren silence of inanimate night. The lazy water plashed in long broad billows against the vessel, raised and sunk it, and carried it with fearful speed towards the open sea. The lighthouses that blazed so cheerily so shortly before, now looked like dismal meteors in the distance, and burnt more feebly every instant. A kind of glittering mist ascended from the deep, and spread itself like a grey pall studded with brilliants about the powerless boat; for through the vapoury and flickering veil the stars of heaven twinkled. Right and left, emerging from the gloomy water, broad, dull, silvery stripes glimmered; and a hollow murmur resounded from them, making its way to the ears of the involuntary voyagers.

"What is that?" asked Theodore. "Can a ship be near?"

"No!" replied Möns. "It is the voice of the surge beating on the sand banks. Those ghost-like plains, those silvery fields, that lie on every side, are the sea sands, laid bare by the ebb,—the terror of all mariners, but, with the grace of God, our salvation this night. Do you see the white stripe gleaming ahead of us—there, where a thousand beams are dancing like ocean spirits? That is the *Bird Sand*; further to the right is the shining surface of the *Giant Sand*. Let our boat touch one or the other of them, and we are safe. The next tide will send us afloat again, and we may reach home, after all, before day-break. But should the ebb once take us out to sea, I can promise you nothing more than the mercy of Providence."

Resignation, the tranquillity of despair, was evinced by all. The boat drifted faster and faster, carried along by the almost iron grasp of the receding tide. The calm that lay upon the slumbering ocean

was rendered more solemn and striking by the absence of any thing in the shape of a vessel or a human being. The seamews seemed to have dominion of the element. They shot, with their glossy plumage, like sparks over the water's surface, or, with a moaning wail, circled in thick flocks around the onward-floating boat. The smaller insulated bands were passed: one after another they seemed to glide away from the disappointed eyes of the luckless voyagers: quicker than ever the little boat was borne towards the coast of Holstein. The Giant Sand alone remained in sight, the last, the only hope of safety. It lay in front of the vessel, and, as the unhappy wanderers would fain believe, ready to receive them in her lap. Möns, cautious and deliberate in the greatest danger, kept a sharp look-out, and strove continually to give his boat the direction most favourable for a landing. All was silence; and for a full half hour the fate of the party was still in the balance. Suddenly and unexpectedly the old man called aloud to William, and ordered him to throw out the lead. He did so. There was a short but terrible suspense—a shrill cry of joy—and then the thrilling news—"Safe—safe! Thank God, we are on the Giant!"

The old sailor huzzaed as he uttered the thanksgiving. The sisters sobbed hysterically, and pressed closer to each other's heart. Theodore was all activity, aiding the exertions of the lad William, who had already hoisted a sail to catch the first puffs of a breeze that had sprung up at the moment. The boat answered the helm as she ran straight upon the frothy wall, with which the surge girded the extensive sand bank.

"We shall be dashed to pieces!" exclaimed Theodore.

"Hush, hush! there's no danger!" answered Möns. "The ebb surge bellows, but does nothing worse. The belt is very small, and has no power!"

Whilst he spoke, the boat struck with great force upon the sand. The pilots were overboard in an instant, drawing their vessel further up upon the landing-place, and making it secure. The trembling and exhausted girls alighted, and, assisted by Theodore, found refuge upon the moist but firm surface of sand which had, indeed, proved their sanctuary.

These sand banks, which crowd in the passage of the Elbe, and especially at its mouth, in fearful numbers, are flat, and at ebb-tide rise only a few feet above the water. Although for the most part washed with a bubbling froth, they afford an enviable refuge in the hour of extremity. The Giant Sand, broader than all the rest, and slightly elevated towards the centre, will, even at flood-tide, in calm weather, receive and keep in safety a few individuals. Never did creatures before bless the sight of land more heartily, or press it more affectionately, than our party, rescued from the sea. Theodore glanced around him in the hope of seeing an approaching ship. Möns in silence awaited the turn of the tide, and prayed internally for a change of wind.

Midnight passed, and the sea still slept. What other term shall so well express the condition of a quiet ocean at the season of the

lowest ebb ! The surge noised and raged no longer against the smooth sand. It rolled, mildly and melodiously, murmuring amongst the moist pebbles, playing with sea-weed, sedge, and shell. The appeased spirits of the sisters could call up in the sound the swelling and soft dying tones of the accordion, or imagine it to be the dreaming of the sea-god, rocked upon the gentle billows.

Overcome with anxiety and exhaustion, the maidens fell at length asleep. Theodore covered them with his cloak, to protect them partially from the raw air. He himself paced, with the pilots, up and down the sand, now gazing upwards to the heavens, now out into the gloomy sea, from which at times a light like that of the Will-o'-the-wisp flickered and gleamed.

Thus situated, the minutes crawled away with painful slowness. The night looked dismal and oppressive without a breath of air. By degrees the glimmer of the stars expired in the horizon ; a mist packed itself in solid masses, shutting out the sky, and a hollow noise like thunder resounded in the distance. Theodore listened with fixed attention, and then turned to the pilots for an explanation of the report.

"The tide is turning," answered Möns, "and brings, I fear, an unbidden guest along with it. We shall have a storm. The light on Heligoland has vanished in the fog, and look to the nor'-west there; do you see the lightning dancing like snakes upon the water? Quick, bid the poor children get into the boat again. We shall have little time to spare when the tide comes spitting her scum over the flats and sands."

The sisters were awakened, and once more took their seats in the little boat. The pilots were ready to embark, when a gust of wind came whistling across the sand: the sea bubbled and rolled angrily away far over the sandy island.

"Now, boy!" commanded Möns; "steady, steady; bring her head to the wind!"

He had hardly spoken before Louisa, the elder of the sisters, exclaimed, in a voice of ecstasy:—

"Oh, Theodore, Caroline, look at that gorgeous northern light!" She pointed towards Heligoland, and every eye followed her delicate white hand. A streak of purple, large and glowing, rose like a pillar from the deep, bursting into a thousand rays towards the zenith. As they looked, the streak grew redder and redder, until it filled the night with a solemn illumination. The sea itself glared in reflexion, took the colour, and, agitated by the tide and some impetuous blasts of wind, spouted blood-like foam into the brilliant atmosphere.

"Is it a northern light?" asked Theodore.

A rumbling noise travelled along the waters before the pilot could reply.

"No," answered Möns, decidedly. "This comes from no northern light. It is a ship on fire!"

"A ship on fire!" screamed the girls. "What! in the sea! Oh, what will become of the poor creatures? Can we help them, Möns?"

"Pray to Heaven, child, that we may have help ourselves. We shall need it. A storm is brewing, and we shall have work to do whilst it lasts."

"There's something rising!" cried William; "look ahead!"

A huge flame rose as it seemed from the middle of the sea. It grew visibly, rapidly advanced, and shed a circular glare upon the ocean and sand banks. The wind whistled. The waves were hillocks of blood, mounting and bellowing until their glowing jaws opened wide and sprang like hungry tigers upon the sandy plains.

"It is a steam-boat!" said Möns; guiding his own little boat with all his skill through the breakers.

"Tack, William! We shall not be worse off. It would be madness to steer against this wind, and let us help yon wretches if we can."

The swelling sails caught the wind and flew over the boiling water notwithstanding the strength of the tide, that increased now every moment. It was not long before the black hull of a steamer was discerned, half of it in flames. The tall funnel, red-hot and shivered, looked like solid rays of fire in the air. Signals of distress came at short intervals from the boat, but it was difficult to distinguish them in the cracking and howling of wind and storm.

The sight of the blazing vessel, borne along as if upon the wings of the hurricane, was so truly magnificent, so fearfully sublime, that the tenants of the small boat, themselves in imminent danger, forgot every thing but that terrible spectacle, upon which they gazed in dumb astonishment. Sails, cables, spars, and beams, hissing and blazing, were hurled by the wind into the raging waters, and a broad glittering train of fire extended itself for a considerable distance behind the steamer, giving a purple hue to a prodigious flock of seamews who fluttered around the foreign element, yelling their hideous hoarse complaints. The fated vessel pranced like an untamed steed, till one monstrous wave hurled it upwards, and then suffered it to fall like a lifeless thing upon the sand. A universal heart-rending cry of pain and despair fell upon the pitiless ear of the stormy night, and then all was again tranquil, save the ruthless winds and roaring waters, between whose shrieks and moans the crackling of the fire made itself too plainly audible. The unfortunate steam-boat had stranded upon the *Giant*.

"South-west by west, William! hard to wind! and, now with God's help, to their assistance." So saying, Möns pressed the helm down with all his strength, and the boat, with wind and tide in her favour flew like a seagull to the rescue.

The whole fore-part of the vessel was in flames to the keel. The poop was still safe, although from every side the forked flames were struggling towards it, and a black smoke was already gushing from the cabin windows. The engine was still at work, and the paddles, as if urged by a fiend, were impotently lashing the waters, and digging up weed and sand from the bottom.

Theodore and the sisters, losing all thought of peril in witnessing the greater danger of the crew belonging to the burning vessel, waved

their handkerchiefs as a signal of approaching help. The small boat was instantly perceived. A little crowd of women, men, and children had pressed close to the wheel where still the helmsman mechanically grasped the helm. The greater number of the passengers had already got off in the safety boat in which, with the captain of the steamboat, they had too confidently resigned themselves to the mercy of the storm.

The billows struck against the stranded ship with frightful vehemence, and often mingled with the devouring flames without being able, however, to extinguish them. The heat and their critical situation forbade every effort on the part of the spirited crew of the pilot boat for the rescue of the miserable creatures yet clinging to the steam-boat. These, too, were so dismayed and overpowered by their horrible situation that they could do nothing for themselves. Not a rope was thrown to the little boat that fought so bravely on their behalf with the determined and unruly waters.

By dint of indefatigable cries and signals, a young man was at length roused into activity. He held in his arms a child of three or four years of age, whilst a young woman lay fainting in his lap. The half-dead creature he put gently away, laid the child at her side, then grasped a rope, and, with the strength of despair, threw it towards the boat. It fell into the sea beyond it. William grasped at it with a hand accustomed to such work, made it fast to the stern-post, and then called as loud as he could to the shipwrecked company, entreating them to haul in. The command animated all. Women, as well as men, their hearts thrilling at the prospect of rescue, seized the life-rope, and clung to it until the boat, dragged through the perilous breakers, was brought close under the stern of the burning ship, and protected from the force and fury of the billows.

With the utmost difficulty, and with unspeakable danger, many of the unhappy beings slid down into the pilot's boat upon a cable made fast for the purpose. In a very short time the narrow shell was filled,—crowded in every part. Three persons yet remained to be saved; the man at the helm, and a newly married couple. "Enough!" cried Möns. "The boat can carry no more. The tide is getting stronger, the wind is against us, and the sea runs mountains high!"

"Oh, for mercy's sake!" implored the young wife, clasping her hands—"kind creatures, take us in! Heaven will protect you!"

"What cares the sea for Heaven?" impiously replied old Möns. "William, let go the rope."

"Stay!" cried the man at the helm. "You may still make room for two in the boat; a third might perhaps capsize her. Father Möns, thou know'st me!"

The old man gazed intently for a moment, and then shrieked out "My boy, my boy Christian!" At the same time he stretched his hands imploringly towards the ship, and prayed the helmsman rather with his eyes than his lips to leap below and save himself before it might be too late.

"Thou art right, father!" said the man, "I am Christian. May Heaven be gracious to thee, as thou showest thyself human! This is

my daughter and my son-in-law. Receive them — spare their young lives. I remain here at my post. Whilst two planks hold together, I shall not forsake the spot!”

“Christian, thou long-missed child — my boy that I have not looked upon for twenty years!” whimpered the grey-headed pilot. “Come down, come down; lay thy head upon this old bosom, that mine may lie peacefully in the grave!”

“Take them father, take them!” was the only reply — and then a man, holding a woman, half dead, in his arms, slid into the boat.

“The boat is worth her weight in gold, Christian!” continued Möns, “She’ll carry us all. — Come, come!”

“Heaven forbid that I should sink you!” answered the voice of the helmsman; and then was heard the sharp and quick stroke of a hatchet. The rope dropped into the sea, and a monstrous wave carried the pilot boat far away from the steamer. The old man strove to bring his boat within reach again of the burning vessel, but, heavily laden as she was, it was impossible. One wave after another rolled between father and son, and rendered the endeavours of the pilot useless. The steamer was now in flames throughout. She separated in the middle, and the fire burst through her. For a very short time the tall dark form of the helmsman was seen standing erect near the wheel. The flames were not long in reaching him. A cry was heard, and then a heavy plashing in the water. Every breath in the boat was hushed, every ear listened. There was the stillness of death. The sea itself was visibly assuaging. The storm was at an end; the stars twinkled again through the breaking clouds; and, in the far distance sounded the muffled thunder, whilst at long intervals the feeble lightning flashed, pale and weak, upon the ocean.

“He is gone!” exclaimed Möns, wringing his hands. “God be merciful to his brave soul, and grant him a soft pillow at the bottom!”

The over-filled boat sailed, borne upon the bosom of the tide, swiftly towards the mouth of the Elbe. *Neuwerk* was soon in sight. The glare from the burning ship grew dimmer and dimmer, and in the east the morn was already appearing. The sea was calm, the wind steady, and the rescued company sailed securely for land.

As they approached it, an unusual spectacle presented itself to the sisters, who, in spite of the anguish they had suffered, had reason to bless their folly, and to be thankful that a girlish caprice had been the salvation of so many unfortunates. Pilot boats from every side shot past them, most of them in silence; but others asking greedily whether there yet remained any thing worth saving on board the burning ship. Neither Möns nor William heeded the questioners. They did their duty mechanically on board their own boat, but not another syllable escaped their lips.

With the first beams of the sun the boat landed in Cuxhaven. Möns conveyed his grand-daughter to his hut. Terror, and the loss of her father-in-law had robbed her of all consciousness, and thrown her into a violent fever. Theodore and his sisters followed the old pilot, whose desperate taciturnity made them apprehensive for his reason.

Upon the evening of the same day, old and young were hurrying to the beach. Half-burnt planks, singed cables, and the like, were already brought ashore, and others were floating towards it. There was one object drifting upon the water, at about half a mile's distance from land, that excited particular attention. A boat was manned and sent after it without delay. It was found to be an overturned boat; and, from her build and marks, it was not difficult to see that she had belonged to the unhappy steam-ship. Her crew must have gone down in the storm.

Möns went with the rest to the beach more from custom than curiosity or desire. Theodore and William were his companions. The strand was covered with burnt fragments. The sad evidences of the miserable business, to which they had all three been eye-witnesses, moved them to tears. In a cluster of sea-weed Theodore perceived a human arm projecting. He crept to the spot, as he believed, unmarked by Möns; but the old man beheld him liberating a body from its muddy covering, and in the next moment he uttered deep wild groans over the mutilated body of his child.

The corpse was solemnly borne into the cottage of old Möns; and during the long night the father sat by it. He gazed immovably upon it. His head at length dropped, and, sighing piteously, he suffered it to repose upon the breast of his son.

Thus he was found on the following morning by Theodore and his sisters. The blow had struck the old mariner and killed him.

Three days later, father and son were buried. The whole fraternity of pilots followed their oldest brother to the grave in solemn procession. Nor were Theodore and his sisters absent. The rescued grand-daughter recovered but slowly from a nervous fever, and withdrew, with her husband, into the interior; so that, for the remainder of her life, she might be spared the sight of a place connected with the most disastrous hours of her existence.

It was on the very day that Möns was carried to his last resting-place, that a far different scene was enacting on the neighbouring island of Heligoland; one, indeed, of a more exhilarating nature, and characteristic enough of the boldness and true-heartedness that belong essentially to these children of the sea.

It was the hour of earliest morning. Before a cottage door, upon a stone, sat a blue-eyed girl, looking earnestly and with dimmed eyes upon the gentle undulations of the sea. At her feet lay some torn nets, waiting for repair. At her side stood a ruddy little fellow, who had already once or twice presented for her acceptance a few mackerel of his own catching, without having been able to secure either the ear or the notice of the maiden.

"Ah! there's no getting a kind word from her now," said the fair-haired boy. "Since Katharine has taken up with the foreigners, she grows prouder and prouder; and now she is too fine to take the pretty mackerel that I caught at my first haul this morning, and thought to sell to her for one of her sweet looks."

The girl patted the cheek of her young admirer, took the gift, and

thanked him kindly for it. But she put it down upon the torn nets, gazed once again upon the sea, and sighed deeply. Her brother Nicholas had, in the mean-time, approached her unperceived.

"Why still so sad, Kitty?" he asked suddenly, breaking in upon her reverie.

The girl started, but answered only with a sob.

"Come, come, Kate!" said the young fisherman. "I shall not put to sea until you have told me your trouble. I should be ashamed of myself if I neglected any thing to give you comfort. Are you ill? No! Did any one offend you last night at *The Red Water*? Not that either! Then you are in love, girl, and are crying because your sweetheart has been civil to another damsel."

"No, no, dear brother!" replied the girl: "it is much worse. I don't deserve your kindness. I deserve to be thrown from Hamilton's Point into the sea, and to have my disgrace hidden there for ever — wretched and abandoned as I am!"

"Flood and storm!" exclaimed the fisherman, knitting his brows suspiciously. "Those are fearful words, girl, and sound as if something deadly had happened indeed!" He stopped, and fixed a scrutinising eye upon the girl. Katharine's eyelids fell, and a pearly drop or two dropped from the silken lashes. Her eye then wandered stealthily towards the sea, accompanied by long and deep-drawn sighs.

Nicholas, shrewd, and not easy to deceive, watched his sister closely, but did not ask her another question. Several light Heligoland fishing-boats moved over the rippling surface of the sea, their sails now flaming up blood-red, like fiery meteors, now glistening in clear silver-white. Further out, laved a larger vessel, with sails all set, but almost motionless upon the waters.

"Ah!" said Nicholas, "Anderson has got a bad wind. If it would only keep steady, he would be in *Husum* in less than five days."

Katharine sighed as usual, and looked so longingly at the strange craft, that it seemed she would gladly have prevented its departure altogether.

"Anderson is a fine fellow!" continued the brother. "It is a pity we are about to lose him!"

Another sigh, and another look, half-timorous, half-doubtful, at her brother

"I mean what I say!" added Nicholas. "Heligoland would lose nothing if she could count a brave fellow like Anderson amongst her children."

"Yes!" answered Kate very sorrowful, and wiping a tear away with her apron, which had for some time settled in the hollow of her cheek, like a pearl in the shellfish.

"You like him, don't you!" asked Nicholas abruptly. "Well, there's no harm done, if he likes you, provided he comes like a man, and is honest in his intentions!"

"Brother — dear good brother!" exclaimed Katharine, throwing her arms about the neck of the young man. "Forgive me, cast me off — cast me into the sea — I deserve nothing better."

"What ails you, girl? Have you engaged yourself to Anderson?" Katharine shook her head, and wept.

"Well, well—he means to marry you."

His sister sobbed, and shook her head again: but this time, not in affirmation.

"No—and why not?"

"Because—because——"

"Because what, girl? speak!"

"Because he dares not!" answered Katharine.

"Dares not! Flood and storm! Can a man be a man, and say he *dares* not? Wait till we meet again, old fellow, and if I don't calk your delicate conscience so that you never forget it, my name isn't Nicholas! A scampish smooth-faced shark! Does the fellow don his fine coat and Sunday hat to wheedle our girls, and when he has caught one, does the smuggler weigh anchor in the dark and run away? Is that his plan? Only let us come within reach of each other again, and if I don't prove a thornback to you, Master Anderson, I'll forgive you. Never mind him, Kitty. Forget the fool! We have handsome chaps enough at home!"

Katharine trembled whilst her brother spoke; and her beautiful auburn tresses escaped from the half turban, and fell to her shoulders. She grasped her brother's hand, wept aloud, and protested again and again that she could never forget the stranger, nor henceforward look an honest Heligolander in the face.

After this intimation, there needed but few questions from the amazed and indignant brother to learn the exact condition of his sister. The poor girl implored her brother upon her knees to be merciful to her, and not to disown her because of her misconduct. Nicholas folded his arms, knit his large brows, and remained for some minutes silent, thoughtful, and gloomy. He looked unsteadily and angrily upon the sparkling ocean, where the vessel was still dancing on one spot.

"Say no more, Katharine," he said at last, pressing his sister's hand. "I am not a barbarian, and I will not be unbrotherly or harsh. Keep yourself quiet: dry your tears—be a good child, and hope for better days. But call me a rascal that deserves hanging if I don't within this hour bring back your lawful husband to you!"

Nicholas turned to the lad who had listened with excited curiosity to the whole scene, and bade him run and summon to the beach as loudly as he could every true friend of Heligoland. The little urchin scarcely waited for his bidding. There is no spot of earth in the world so famous for the screeching of boys as Heligoland. The young fisherman ran into the nearest lane and proclaimed his message with Stentorian lungs. An army of boys quickly joined him, who, without the slightest inquiry into the cause of the shrieking, backed their leader with their united efforts. Then appeared the crier—a grand, but apathetic personage; the greatest philosopher and the unequalled tippler of the island. Tall, and lean, and half drunk, he stepped in amongst the young brood, and assumed a vast importance, carrying his huge hands, which very much resembled bears' claws, upon the

broad of his back. He was a comical fellow, that crier, with the muscles of his face in perpetual motion. He made his bow right and left, and then in a drunken voice with ill-assumed firmness, he, as it were officially, summoned forth the people. His words worked wonders. From every house came the pilots pouring out, their tar jackets rustling like an autumn wind — one asking the other the cause of the sudden alarm; but none receiving any satisfactory answer. All crowded after the great crier, who, in his apathy, marched as slowly as he well could, sometimes reeling a little but always bowing, and repeating some portion of his cry. Many importuned him with their inquiries; but the functionary condescended no other answer than, "I cry what I am bid, and I cry nothing more!"

Nicholas, smarting with insult and rage, had lost no time in meeting the friends whom he had called to the beach. In a few words he related to the assembly what had happened, asked them all as honest men to put to sea with him at once, and to bring back the fugitive by fair means or by foul.

"Flood and storm!" exclaimed the young pilot, "for all his villany my sister is a good and virtuous girl, and such she shall continue. She shall have the man of her choice, if I have to fetch him alone out of Spitzbergen. Come, lads, bear a hand; haul down '*The King of Prussia*,' '*The Sun*,' '*Heligoland*,' '*The Mermaid*.' Let us be after the betrayer, and do our duty by our wives and sisters!"

A loud huzza expressed the willing assent of every pilot present. In a few minutes the sloops were afloat — the sailors were as busy as bees. Notwithstanding the unfavourable wind, sails were hoisted, by whose assistance the little fleet, in a wonderfully short space of time, were beyond the red water. So far prosperous, the boats put about, fixed their course, and with another huzza they bounded along to their object. In the horizon, the vessel of the fugitive still appeared distinctly, sailing now more quickly with the aid of the wind, which had within the last half hour diverged a few points to the west. But the Heligolandians are the boldest and most audacious of seamen. The wind, unfavourable as it was, must serve them. They trusted to their good cause and healthful energies, and they steered exultingly towards the open sea, confident in the success of their extravagant and adventurous chase.

Katharine had beheld the extraordinary preparations from the height of the *Fallm*, and it must be confessed, with peculiar feelings. Joy and alarm predominated in her bosom. She could not but pray for the happiest result to the romantic expedition; and yet to think of the possible resistance which her beloved one might offer to her pursuing countrymen filled her with apprehension. The saddest pictures presented themselves to her mind, and then she bitterly reproached herself for the confession that her fear had wrung from her. Upon the disappearance of the vessels, she quitted the *Fallm*, and returned to her humble dwelling. She fastened the door of the house to avoid the prying visits of her acquaintances, and busied herself in the mending of her brother's nets.

Anderson in the mean while sailed slowly but surely towards the

coast of Sleswic, without the smallest suspicion of the encounter that awaited him. The sea was almost calm, uniformly flowing—its hue, a gorgeous green. Anderson stood at the helm, and as his conscience urged him every now and then to look back upon the scene of his infidelity, his heart grew heavy, and he drew his breath deeper. His vigilant eye noted the stir upon the beach, and the little fleet at sea did not escape him. Still there was nothing in all this to cause him apprehension. When the freshening breeze came to him from the south-west he profited by his good fortune, brought his vessel close under it, and cut with greater speed along the sparkling waters. The Heligolandiers, however, as well as himself, knew the worth of the soft wind—their boats were light, and they gained upon him. Half an hour did not elapse before the Dane perceived that the islanders were bearing towards him. They came nearer and nearer, and were evidently sailing faster than himself. It was then that Anderson called to his men.

"Lads! what are these boats sailing on our lee?"

"Heligoland sloops, sir; as any blind rat could tell you!"

"Keep your remarks to yourself. Is this a favourable wind for fishing?"

"Don't think it is, sir."

"About sail!" called Anderson. "South, south by west!"

The sailors obeyed the word of command; the ropes whizzed, the sails once or twice violently flapped against the masts, and the vessel, obedient to the helm, turned her head towards the entrance of the Elbe. Anderson looked out, more than usually excited. The sails of the Heligolandiers glimmered in the sunny light. They also had turned their prow homewards, and were following in his course. The young Dane said nothing: but his hand was instantly on the wheel again, and his vessel was soon upon her old road. The Heligolandiers imitated his manœuvre.

Anderson was at a loss to account for their movements. He could see clearly enough that the Heligolandiers were after him; and he did not fail to remember, at the same time, that he had basely deserted a girl, to whom in the moment of passion he had sworn eternal love and constancy: but he relied upon the secrecy of the unhappy girl, and would not believe that she had published her own disgrace. Still his uneasiness increased, the more so as the Heligolandiers gained upon him, and arrived at least so near as to be within hail. He could hear menaces without being able to catch their signification; he could distinguish the tone of execrations, and see fists doubled as if to threaten him. Surrounded by the sloops, and at their mercy, Anderson felt by no means easy. He seized his trumpet, and boldly asked the object of the pilots, and what their hostile conduct signified. He was told, in answer, to reef sail and to lie to, instantly.

"What is your object?" repeated Anderson. "Foul or fair?"

"As you please," replied the spokesman. "Fair, if you comply with our demands!"

"Keep her to the wind, lads!" cried Anderson to his men. "It will never do to surrender to these starved dogs."

"Hurrah!" shouted the Heligoland-ers, flourishing their hats and caps. "At him! Bait him till his ribs crack! Cut his wind off! Yes, run, you ragamuffin! If you are an honest man, lower your flag and keep your word! At him for the honour of Heligoland—Hurrah!"

The Heligoland-ers have by nature a thievish longing and a love of mischief; and both are cultivated by their island education. As a matter of mere sport, they desired to prolong their chase; and certain of their superiority, they had little fear of the enemy's escape. On his account, they accorded him a little advantage, then they made after him with all their speed, and stunned the air with their huzzas. Anderson cried himself hoarse; his people did their best to execute his orders; but the vessel itself seemed nailed to the spot, and every minute brought the Heligoland-ers closer to it. Upon his lee and weather sides they advanced, already within two boats' length of him. Heavy sweat drops hung about the forehead of Anderson as he stood satisfied that all escape was impossible: yet voluntarily to surrender to the triumphant Heligoland-ers was an act that a brave seaman's heart would never consent to.

"Lads," he exclaimed, addressing his crew, "let these Strand-snipes come on, and if they attempt to board us give them such a welcome upon the nose as shall put a stop for ever to their sneezing!"

"Hurrah!" responded the Strand-snipes. "Think better of it, Dane! don't resist us. Come on board we will, as friends or foes, whichever you please. Which shall it be?"

"Who speaks for you?" asked Anderson.

Nicholas showed himself.

"Ah!" said Anderson in a towering rage. "Is that your errand? How many shiploads of turf do you bring as a dowry to tempt me?"

"Curse the villain, the infamous defamer!" exclaimed the brother of Katharine. "At him, boys—at him!"

The tumult was beyond description. It was evident that the greater number of the Heligoland-ers, sure of their victory, had resolved to have some fun for their trouble, and to make a regular amusement of the capture. Nicholas alone, of the whole party, was in sober earnest. He looked like a savage, and received his future brother-in-law not with the most flattering salutations. The shallops were soon alongside the Dane; in an instant four men had hold of the vessel's ropes, and before Anderson had well begun his defence, notwithstanding that he cut about him like a roused lion, he and his crew were overcome amidst the wild laughter and derision of his conquerors. The helmsman, Nicholas himself took care of: another was put in his place; and before poor Anderson could recover his senses, his vessel was already turned, and quietly sailing back to Heligoland.

The defeated man took his seat on the capstan, where he remained biting his lips, and well guarded. The Heligoland-ers made themselves comfortable after their labours. They laughed, joked, sang, and drank cold grog.

"How pretty Kate will smile when she sees her faithful lover hurrying back to see her," said one.

"Yes, and it will be so unexpected too," added another.

"So like a lover, isn't it?" said a third. "Here's your health, Anderson. I wish you joy on your marriage!"

Nicholas roused the Dane from his gloomy reflexions with a vigorous shake of his hand.

"Anderson!" said the young pilot. "You have not acted honestly by my sister. You have taken a brutal advantage of her inexperience and love for you. You must make all good, and give your hand to the girl at the altar, like a man."

"Nicholas, I can't!" replied the Dane peevishly. "Let me go. I tell you it can't be! By Heaven, it can't!"

"Can't be!" exclaimed the youth, his eyes glowing with rage. "We shall see, Dane. What! do you think we Heligolandians suffer our sisters to be ruined by foreigners, and then look quietly on whilst the villains sneak away. Anderson, you do not know us. I tell you our girls are good and honest, and have no guilt at their hearts. If a too confiding creature falls into error, a brave fellow knows how to repair the mischief he has caused, and gives his hand to raise her up again. All is forgotten then. It is a righteous act, and must be done. We are poor, but we know the worth of virtue in our sisters. A pretty trick you would have played us. Heaven forgive you for it! But we do not understand your Danish pastimes. Zounds! be a man — be reasonable and wise, restore my sister to honour, and I give you my word you shall not repent fixing your home amongst us here in Heligoland."

Anderson was dumb. The vessels ran into harbour, and were welcomed with shouts of triumph. Half the population of Heligoland had assembled on the beach. Old pilots were looking down from the *Fallm*. Near them was a group of women, and amongst these poor Katharine, whose heart beat quickly as she saw her darling brought to land. She hurried home, and there awaited the return of her valiant brother, and less valiant but still much-loved Anderson. Agitated as she was, a secret smile of joy at her victory played upon her countenance, and gave an additional charm to the sweetness of a face, of which the Dane might, with justice, have been proud.

There was the noise of an insurrection upon the beach. The high-spirited island youth — young Heligoland — shrieked ungovernably, and rendered their wantonness of joy a public nuisance. In sheer delight, they banged one another about with huge roots of sea-weed, surrounded the pilots, and danced, in a comical triumphant procession, both before and in the rear of the moody Anderson, who, amidst the laughter of his conquerors, was borne straight to the habitation of his true and lawful bride.

Nicholas deemed it policy to have no witness to the meeting of the lovers. They met alone. Kate coloured up as her faithless one approached her, looked at him earnestly, and offered him her hand. He took it, and she threw herself upon his neck.

"Cruel Anderson!" she exclaimed. "I have thee again!"

"Kate!" said Anderson, much dejected, "I have done you a wrong which can never be repaired. Hone nothing! I must leave you again."

"Leave me! No, Anderson, you will not be so wicked. Our brothers will not let you. Fye, Anderson! away with that frown! Once upon a time you did not look so at me. Not surely upon that evening when we sat together on the cliff watching the moonbeams on the sea. You had no frowns then for me; nothing but honied words, sweet looks, and kisses! Have you forgotten all so soon? Or is it the custom with men to live only for the present, and in the future to belie their protestations? For shame! Women are more faithful to their vows, and would rather die than break them. Come, deceiver! you shall not quit your Kate again; you will be kind and good to me as you have always been!"

"Would to heaven!" exclaimed Anderson, almost beside himself, "that I had been drowned in my cradle!"

"And why?" asked Nicholas, entering the apartment as he spoke.

"Nicholas," continued Anderson, "let me have a word in private with you. I love your sister. I would deal honourably by her—but I tell you it's impossible."

Nicholas opened the door of the cot, and the two men quitted it in company.

In the evening, Nicholas, his sister, and Anderson were together. The two latter were seated, and, as it appeared, reconciled. Nicholas however still looked unsatisfied and displeased.

"How could you be so inconsiderate, man!" he said, speaking to the Dane. "A seaman and so fickle!"

The Dane shrugged his shoulders, and pressed the hand of Katharine.

"You love my sister, don't you?" asked Nicholas.

"As truly as I do my ship."

Nicholas walked up and down the little chamber, scratching his honest head. "Something occurs to me!" said he, suddenly standing still. "Anderson, it was not for fun, or to be disappointed, that we had our chase to-day. It shan't be so, or I'll drink salt-water when I next put to sea. My sister shall be your wife, and you, Anderson, shall go with me before the magistrates to-morrow morning.

"Brother!" said Katharine, imploringly.

"Say nothing. I am resolved. What is there to conceal? You are engaged, and must be married. Anderson, I have said it, you go with me to-morrow."

The authorities of Heligoland, simple pilots, like the rest of the inhabitants, fixed an hour for the hearing of the case between Anderson and Nicholas. The matter was brought forward, both parties heard, and then there was a long and anxious pause, during which the magistrates consulted. The oldest amongst them acted as spokesman for the rest.

"So, Anderson, you are already engaged to a girl in Sleswic?"

"More's the pity, sir!"

"Regularly betrothed?"

"No doubt of it!"

"And she wouldn't give you up now, if you asked her?"

"Can't say, sir. She has got an obstinate head of her own, and a

for a tongue, I never met the parson yet that she couldn't preach down. It is no good talking, it can't be remedied!"

There was another pause. The judges put their heads together again, and after a short deliberation the former speaker continued:—

"Charles Anderson, since the case in question requires a speedy settlement, and since nothing is easier than a speedy settlement with men of sound and healthy understanding, we, the magistrates of Heligoland, bearing in mind the laws and usages of this our island, have decreed as follows:—*First*, that you, Charles Anderson, mariner and pilot of the port of Husum, do remain with us from this day forward: *secondly*, that you marry the girl to whom you have already promised marriage: *lastly*, that you be received at once into our society of pilots. It is an old proverb and a good law, one that has been observed since the creation, that he who *holds* is right. Now we hold you at present: we won you in fair chase, and we shall keep you till a stronger tears you from us. Besides, as magistrates, we must regard the virtue, the morals, and the rights of our people, and keep them free from injury. We can never think of suffering one of our children to be deserted by a man to whom she has entrusted her honour, and who has sworn to love and cherish her. The thing is impossible. Therefore we say, it is our will and pleasure that you marry Katharine without delay, and leave your other sweetheart to find another lover. Are you content?"

Anderson, very much excited, grasped the hand of the speaker. "I am a Heligolander!" said he, "and I'll stay with you for ever. Nicholas," he continued, turning to his future brother-in-law, "if I don't do what's right, may I be swamped. As for Polly at Sleswic, she is a good girl, but as full of fancies as the sea in autumn."

Intelligence of the singular verdict soon spread in the island, occasioning more boisterous mirth on the part of the rising generation. The old men, too, laughed as loudly as any; and when, at the end of a week, the united couple made their tour of the island, there was hardly a man, woman, or child, who did not join them in the excursion.

It is said that Anderson and Kate have lived like pigeons ever since: and as for Polly at Sleswic, she laughed outright when she heard of the faithlessness of her former sweetheart, and made a long oration, which well repaid her for any disappointment she had suffered from her loss.

THE ROSE OF JUNE.

OH ! sweet are the flowers of early Spring
 When her budding wreath she weaves ;
 And bright are the glowing tints that cling
 To the last of Autumn leaves.
 And dear to me was the spring-time once,
 And bright was the harvest moon ;
 But mine eye now turns with a kinder glance
 To the cloudless skies of June.

For we met beneath those skies at eve,
 As the sun in splendour set ;
 But our souls were dark as the eastern wave,
 Which the evening rays forget.
 For Fortune sever'd my love from me,
 And we wept to part so soon ;
 But the token she gave for memory
 Was a blooming rose of June.

For that was all of its worshipp'd wealth
 That the world had given us then ;
 But, oh ! for the wasted hope and health
 Of those vanish'd years again !
 And, oh ! for the love so freely given,
 For life hath no such boon
 To offer now, as was promised then,
 By that lovely Rose of June.

Long, long was the treasured blossom worn,
 When its leaves were dead and sere,
 And far was the frail memorial borne,
 Through the storms of many a year.
 For dear to the depths of memory,
 As the wanderer's household tune,
 When heard on his far and weary way,
 Was that wither'd Rose of June.

My task was done, and my hopes were crown'd,
And I sought my native shore ;
And my home and my kindred's hearts I found
As I left their land of yore.
I came in the strength of hope and love —
In the pride of manhood's noon ;
But I came to plant on her early grave
The first bright Rose of June.

Oh! many a spring, with its blossoms bright,
O'er my lonely path hath swept,
But joyless all, as the morning's light
To the eyes that have not slept.
Yet the flower in my first affection shrined,
Though its beauty perish'd soon,
Still blooms in the wastes of memory, twined
With the lovely Rose of June!

FRANCES BROW



CAMBERWELL FAIR — TOWARDS MIDNIGHT.

Populo panem ac circenses.

Cum magnis, cum plebeis, cum omnibus vixi.

SIR T. BROWN.

A fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

THE CLOWN.

I WENT to the Opera on the closing night, a few weeks since, to enjoy the farewell amenities of song and dance for the season; and, if possible, to treasure up against the winter a few souvenirs of Grisi's "music-panting bosom;" a few parting sparkles of Elsler's flashing feet. The pit was filled to overflowing; and I had fought my way to a seat through a denser concourse than usual, and at the cost of more than the average number of bruises. Every foot of "standing-room" was crammed; and among the unsuccessful competitors for cushionless plank, there was a considerable proportion of ladies. I soon found that my precarious place at the extreme end of a bench, exposed me not only to much mustachoe envy, but to the wistful importunities of a pair of soft feminine eyes, from whose harassing beauty it was impossible to shield my flank. In vain I gazed with stubborn fortitude at the very centre of the scene; I had a side-long consciousness of those beamy beseechings, which fretted my nerves, and hindered my soul from music. If I could have done her some minor service — lent her my glass or my book, for example, — I might have compromised with my conscience, and saved my seat: as you give a penny to Starvation on your way to a feast — and then sip your claret with an untroubled mind. I verily believe, had she but borrowed my playbill, I could have faced her out for the rest of the evening. But precisely the only thing in the world which she wanted was my place. Her sole need involved the sacrifice of my evening's enjoyment. I hesitated — and in such cases the man who hesitates is lost. Next minute she occupied my seat; and I found myself under the Colonnade in the Haymarket. In two minutes more I was on my way to Camberwell Fair; a festival just then (as I happened to know) in full progress.

"From the Opera to Richardson's booth," thought I, stepping into a cab, "will be a sudden transition at any rate; and between my virile and boyish impressions of the scene, the contrast will doubtless be stronger still."

I soon reached Camberwell gate — about a mile from the scene of action. Here I discharged my cab; bought a stout stick of an itinerant vender; and proceeded on foot — thinking so to see more of the fun.

The roadside, even at this distance from the fair, was lined with stalls — where oysters, "wilks," "trotters," pickled salmon, fried

plaiice, and halfpenny toys, were offered for sale with eager vociferation. Their candles shaded with coloured paper—white, green, and red—shed a softened and not displeasing ray; edging the footpath with a line of glimmering light.

I bought at one of these stalls, for a halfpenny, a toy which struck me as a prodigy of cheapness. It represented a man working a set of three hammers and three battering rams, by means of a winch and cogged wheel. It was set in motion by a handle, and though of course rudely made, worked perfectly well. It was painted in three colours; and evidently made entirely by hand. I have since counted in it forty-six separate pieces, thirty-nine glued joints, and eleven moveable joints; and this was *retailed* for a halfpenny! Could the wages paid for making it maintain the artificer in comfort—afford him sufficient food? or had I bought a part of his life for my halfpenny? I thought of the lines—

“O God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!”

“Do it respectable,” said a voice, “and ride for a penny.”

I looked round, and saw a man in a fur cap, sitting on the front of a populous spring-van.

“One more,” said the man, “and we’re off.”

I paid my penny, and got into the van by a ladder at the back. It contained twenty-six people, men, women, and children; four more sat in front with the driver; and between the shafts stood a small, lean horse. My fellow-passengers appeared to be of the poorer labouring class, meanly clad, but merry; there was plenty of joking and laughter in circulation; and two separate songs were going on simultaneously, at the opposite ends of the van.

“Come, I say, driver, go on!” said a little man near me; “you’ve stood here over your time a’ready.”

“Who regulated your watch?” retorted the driver, contemptuously, without turning his head.

Prepayment seemed to have given this fellow rather an unconstitutional power over his public; whom he treated—as the little man indignantly declared—“like dirt.” Nevertheless, in his own good time he set off; and landed us safely at Camberwell Green.

Gods and men! what a hubbub!

The crash of gongs—the clash of cymbals—the brazen braying of trombones—the throbbing of drums—the bellow of speaking-trumpets—the shouts and uproar of the multitude—the grating discord of conflicting bands—altogether formed a hideous *charivari*.

“‘Free Competition’ in all its glory!” thought I.—“Every one for himself—and ‘*laissez-faire*.’”

I found myself opposite the entrance of the principal avenue,—a canvass-covered passage between two rows of gingerbread booths. I stood for a moment looking down the brilliant vista. How vividly the old childish admiration recurred to my memory, as I gazed on those glittering ranks of golden Kings and Queens, receding range above range, in blazing banks of splendour!—all too with their little

red ribbons round their necks, just as they used to be! and the enormous tin canisters standing on the ground, five or six in front of each booth;—inexhaustible I used to think them—deep pits of spicy pleasure—quarries of endless cake—gingerbread for generations!

“O brave old illusions,” thought I, “what are the monotonous realities of life——”

Whrrrrrrrrrr-r-r-r-r-r!

A sudden galvanic shock ran down my spine, accompanied by a horrid rattling croak, which made my flesh creep, and shook my nerves like Tetanus. I sprang convulsively into the air, turning instinctively in my descent, to face my unseen assailant.

“All’s fair at fair-time,” cried a girl, bursting with laughter. “Did you never feel a ‘back-scratcher’ before?”

I made haste to procure one of these instruments, and found it resemble a diminutive watchman’s rattle, having a notched wheel and a spring, the vibrations of which, drawn sharply down the back, produce the electric impulse and harsh shriek described. It was of wood; the cost a penny; and it seemed a favourite weapon—especially among the women.

Following the stream, I entered the crowded avenue.

“Best spice-nuts, Sir,” bawled a stout man, thrusting a cake under my nose. “The *reel* article—try’em, Sir——”

“Here you are, Sir,” cried an old woman interposing her specimen. “The *Reading* nuts, Sir—only a shilling a pound——”

“The *original* spice-nuts, Sir,” said a soft voice in my ear; while a light hand on my arm invited me to turn.

A rosy, smiling girl, with saucy blue eyes, stood balancing a spice-nut between as taper a finger and thumb as Nature ever tipped with rose.

“The *original* spice-nuts, Sir,” she repeated, with a roguish smile.

I looked at the cake as she held it at arm’s length. A rich-brown irregular surface, with a glorious piece of lemon-peel extending, like a smile, across its tawny face.

I hesitated.

She passed the tip of her forefinger from end to end of the fragrant lemon-peel; indicating its abundance. The white finger moved along the lucid yellow, like ivory on amber.

I felt the force of the argument; and decided in favour of originality.

“A pound, Sir?” she inquired, diving into the great canister (what a pretty attitude!)

There was a crisp rattling among the cakes half way down in the canister; and she speedily returned to the surface with an abundant catch.

The bag was filled, swung round by the ears, and delivered, with great despatch.

I handed her half-a-crown in payment.

She took the coin; and *bit it*.

The action was prudent—but disenchanting. I took my change, and passed on.

Quitting the gingerbread booths, I found myself in an open space close to the Merry-go-round ; a horizontal wheel, supporting a circle of horses, saddled and bridled, with very red nostrils and flowing manes ; and a few double-bodied phaetons at intervals, for the accommodation of timid riders. Men, women, and children mounted with equal eagerness ; and I observed that the various colours of the horses, black, white, piebald, mottled, striped, gave rise to much fastidious picking and choosing, even among the adults. Wealthy human imagination ! that can animate these poor toys with interest ; and stir, with something of its own life, dead blocks of painted wood !

The attitudes of the equestrians were diversified. The majority religiously inserted their toes in the little stirrups, held the bridle *secundum artem*, and spurred vigorously. The more facetious spirits sat wrong way foremost, using the tail as a bridle. The ladies for the most part patted their beast kindly with one hand, holding on tight by his ears with the other. The smile on every face widened with the increasing speed, till at last all features were merged in one undistinguishable continuous whiz. And now were shown the mirth-inspiring powers of the wheel—well-named “merry”—for it not only exhilarated its riders, but seemed to sprinkle centrifugal fun among the crowd. Laughter resounded on every side—and not least loudly when the ladies began to utter little screams of “Stop !” retorted by “Go it, yer cripples ! *faster !*” from the gentlemen. I took a round, myself, on a rampant zebra with inflamed eyes, and found the highest velocity rather intoxicating ; notwithstanding which an eager young Arab in my rear swore that “if I didn’t get along *he’d go by me !*”

My next adventure was in the “Up-and-down”—a great vertical wheel, revolving like a windmill, with four boat-like cars, which are alternately carried up thirty feet into the air, and whirled down again to within a foot of the ground. The machine was taking in aeronauts when I came up ; and the car which I entered was the first to be filled. When they turned us up to load the opposite boat, I found myself perched high in the dark air, with a striking view of the picturesque scene below. It was an undulating sea of heads, upon which the lamps of the shows projected large semi-circles of light. The canvass coverings of the booths and avenues, illuminated by the candles beneath, showed great distorted shadows of men and women in incessant motion—like a gigantic fantocini. Over the whole floated a steamy haze, resembling the vapour from a seething cauldron. And the roar of discordant sounds, blending as they rose, seemed to agitate the night air overhead with one uniform continuous ripple. My observations were soon interrupted by the commencement of the motion ; which was like tossing at anchor on some enormous wave—and justified to my mind the mythic propriety of the *boats*. But when the man at the winch had brought the wheel to its full speed, and I heard the music of merry voices pouring from its swift periphery, the machine likened itself, in my fancy, to a prodigious organ, grinding forth some jolly popular tune. The proprietor did fairly by

us; working the winch with so much vigour and perseverance, that I had begun to think of Ixion — the Solar System — the Perpetual Motion — and other examples of eternal revolution — when the wheel abated its speed, and finally stopped.

The motion of the Great Swing, which I next tried, produced quite a different set of sensations; the most characteristic of which occurred at the highest point of each oscillation, when the car came to rest for an instant,—trembling, on slackened ropes, as if dreading the impetuous descent. It reminded me of the wheeling swallow, suddenly poising, with its white belly turned to the sun, before sweeping down to skim the lake. A poet might have fancied himself borne through the “poring dark” in the arms of some geni of the Arabian Nights — like Aladdin in Oehlenschlaeger’s poem :

“ He swung me on in wide gigantic circles,
And stretched me in his hand high into Heaven
As firm as if he trode the floor of earth.
How high he flew in the clear moonshine ; how
The earth beneath us strangely dwarfed and dwindled.
The mighty Ispahan with all its lights,
That one by one grew dim and blent together,
Whirled like a half-burned paper firework, such
As giddy schoolboys flutter in their hands,
And dimly through the moon-beams’ magic glimmer
The mighty map of Earth unrolled beneath me.

As I stepped from the Swing I could not help wondering at the amount of entertainment which these three machines had afforded me ; and I remembered Wordsworth’s often quoted line —

“ The child is father to the man.”

“ What, after all, are these motions,” thought I, “ that have delighted all these grown people, but the rocking of the infant’s cradle, and the dandling of the nurse’s arms, a little magnified?—vibrations of a wider range, for children of a larger growth. And perhaps our serious pursuits may in this respect resemble our pastimes ; determined, from the cradle to the grave, by the same instincts and appetites. So considered, the grave debates of the Senate-house may but mimic, in more pompous forms, the petty politics of the Nursery ; the motion for “short hours” be the childish petition for a half-holiday over again ; and the agitation for a “bigger loaf,” represent the old fretting for a larger bun. Strange lights have shone through cracked brains ; and there may be a profound truth shadowed in the mad-woman’s meditation on her shoe—“ *A little longer, and a little wider, and this, too, would make me a coffin !*”

Heaven knows how much further I might have wandered — gazing the while at the great wheel spinning dimly against the spangled background of the sky — had not a friendly ‘back-scratcher’ brought me down once more from the ‘brave illusions’ to the ‘monotonous reali-

ties" of life.—It is a great leveller, your 'back-scratcher'; a good corrective for a soaring fancy; and shrewdly reminds your philosopher that he is made, to the very marrow of his back, of the same clay as the clown. With which reflection I plunged cheerfully into the crowd; and came to some people shooting at a target for nuts.

They were collected round a barrow, on which was a tray some three feet long, supporting a heap of nuts, with a pipkin of blazing fat in the midst to give light. The target was at one end, painted in coloured rings on a vertical board, and surrounded with harlequins, Britannias, and other figures, grotesquely drawn. It was so contrived that an arrow in the bull's eye caused three little windows to open above, and three quaint heads to pop forth, grinning congratulation. It was ingeniously laid out, I observed, for the saving of nuts; the rings which bore the highest numbers being flanked by those marked with the lowest—so that, as in life, the most signal failures waited on the most venturous ambition. Aiming at 15 you got 10 or 12 at the worst; but the least swerving from the great prize of 40 tumbled you down to 4. The gun employed was like a short carbine with a narrow barrel; the missile resembled a cedar pencil with a needle inserted at one end; the source of power was a percussion cap, which seemed to impel the dart with considerable force. Such targets, by the bye, are common at Paris, in the *Champs Elysees*, where I remember to have seen them often with a live fluttering bird tied by the foot, to be shot at; a gratuitous cruelty never practised, I believe, in England. The diversion seemed to be popular, and struck me as one of the best in the fair; tending to sharpen the senses,—to make the eye just, and the hand steady and nimble. I set a-going a match for six-pennyworth of nuts among the boys; and then made my way to Richardson's theatre.

The exterior appointments of this show are exceedingly good. The stage in front of it is spacious, and well lit by four enormous chandeliers of coloured lamps. These hang from ornamented poles, which jut up diagonally into the air, and give a peculiar and characteristic aspect to the structure. The actors are numerous; and I thought them very well dressed. The ermined purple of the Monarch was spotless; the scale-armour of the Warrior bore a dazzling polish; the jewelled plume and spangled velvet of the Courtier were beauteous to behold. The feathered Savage with his twisted bow, and the Wild Man with his huge club, walked in red cotton skins guiltless of a darn; and the Clown, who kept making faces at them and then running away, was painted up to the highest intensity of red and white. And when the Knight came prancing forth—riding his unmanageable steed on the plan of being inserted through a hole in his body—rearing up—swinging round—kicking out—capsizing Pantaloon—and actually stunning the Clown, who was foolhardy enough to seize the fiery beast's tail—the populace roared with joy; and as I gazed down from the pay-place at the back of the platform, I could see the lines of laughter run across the crowd, grin linked to grin, like chains of sympathetic delight.

Among the actors I particularly noticed a fine comely young fellow, who walked up and down the stage with an equally handsome girl. They danced the Polka together with infinite zest and spirit; he, with comical exaggeration—she, with no little grace. They subsequently approached my position, and I entered into conversation with them. He seemed a very sensible fellow; and told me that he and his partner (who was his wife) earned a very “tidy salary”—that in the intervals of fair-time he was musician at the Pavilion theatre—that they both liked their profession—and enjoyed dancing as well for its own sake as for the applause and the pay. He saw no harm, he said, and no disgrace, in amusing the public, whether in the open air or under cover. “On these very boards,” he concluded, stamping with his foot, “Kean has performed; and I’d liefer dance well here, than as badly as some in-a-doors.”

It struck me that those who set down roving players *en masse* as a set of vagabonds and rogues, might have learned a useful lesson from this honest, right-hearted couple; who set me a-thinking that in this motley world of mixed good and evil, indiscriminate censure may be as often unjust and injurious, as unqualified praise.

At the signal, “All in!” a number of the players entered the booth. Every thing inside fell short of the expectation raised without. The place was dingy and ill-lit—the stage ridiculously small (especially in comparison with the great platform outside); the scenery was wretched—and for all orchestra we had a fiddle and a double bass. In the sixpenny back-seats the performance was quite inaudible; and even in the shilling places railed off in front, it was difficult to hear amidst the noise kept up by the neighbouring shows.

I was curious to make out the action of the piece, which was comprised in some half-dozen scenes. A Scottish Chieftain (as I understood) demands the hand of his enemy’s daughter, and is met with what struck me as a reasonable objection,—viz. that he had slain in battle the great bulk of the young lady’s relations. This leads to much mutual vituperation; an abduction; a rescue; and finally a single combat—in which the suitor falls mortally wounded. Red fire illuminates his dying agonies—in the midst of which he suddenly springs up, and, taking his adversary at unawares, runs him through the body; then nimbly cuts down a harmless by-stander (whose case excited our pity); and, after this devastating revenge, falls to the earth, and “dies contented.” A dull comic song, and a duller pantomime, concluded the entertainments: which struck me as being quite beneath the capacity of the audience, who looked an intelligent set of people; and only laughed once—at the slaughter.

Quitting Richardson’s booth, I saw a gaunt man, with a weighing chair suspended from a tripod, inviting the bystanders to be weighed for a penny. As I stood scanning his apparatus, an enormously fat fellow, with a jolly twinkle in his eye, offered to bet me sixpence he weighed the most. As he was manifestly four times my size, the proposal was preposterous enough to be pleasant; so I said “Done!” and sat down.

“Ten stone five,” said the gaunt man.

My rival seated himself.

"Stop," said I, "it's not fair—you are smoking your pipe, and that weighs something."

"Oh, ah! I forgot," said he; and immediately, to meet the objection, he took the pipe out of his mouth, and (with perfect good faith) *held it in his hand* during the process. A new way of abolishing the weight of a pipe, which mightily tickled my fancy.

Passing on, I came to a Show where a man with a very red face was haranguing the mob through a speaking trumpet; marking every emphasis by an energetic stroke on the gong.

"Here, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "you may see *NATURE* for a penny!" (gong) Here you may behold the group of *Wenomous Serpents* with their fangs drawn (gong) the live *Crocodile* from the Nile, as eats upside-down with the wrong jaw (gong) the *Performing Monkeys* (gong) the *Savage Ingin* (gong) and the *White-haired Boy*" (gong)

I mounted the rickety platform, and entered the caravan; in which some twenty people were crowded; gazing reverentially on the curtain that concealed all these wonders. Everything promised was faithfully displayed; from the monkeys dressed as old women, who wheeled barrows, turned somersets, &c. to the '*Savage Ingin*,' whose nose-ring, formidable javelin, and fierce gesticulations, struck the younger spectators with awe.

During his performance, I peeped through a rent in the curtain; and saw, on a narrow bed behind it, two curly-pated children, lying composed in each other's arms, fast asleep. A little Brazilian monkey, with his tail curled round his feet, sat on their pillow, peeping about with a fidgetty watchfulness, as if he were keeping guard over them. It was a beautiful picture, with a dash of the grotesque. The quiet slumber of the babes contrasted strangely with the surrounding tumult; and in conjunction with the fretful vigilance of their little sentinel would make, I thought, no bad symbol of an *Armed Peace*.

The exhibition concluded with the crocodile, who was declared to have "sixty-two joints down his back, the first you understand, ladies, next his head; whereby he can open his upper jaw—so!"

The suddenly expanded mouth produced a thrill of terror; which the showman (who had seemed all along to have something on his mind) took advantage of to deliver the following speech:

"Malvidious persons next door, ladies and gentlemen, has gone the length of denying as we can shew *NATURE* for a penny. I hope we have this night proved the contrary to your eyes. Them as their own Show aint better than mere wheel-work and kitchen jacks, didnt ought to make malvidious mention; which I, as fitting, scorn to notice; and as such say, They lies! Ladies and gentlemen, I have attended this fair seven and twenty year; and my mortar has constant been *Stick to Truth!* Them, says I, as looks down this here speakin trumpet, shall see *Truth* lying at the bottom, between my lips!"—

This vivid image, delivered with considerable emotion, called forth much applause; in the midst of which I made my exit.

The rival show, next door, was an exhibition of Mechanical Curiosities; "The Stupengious waterfalls of Niagara represented by 900 pounds of glass set in motion by Clockwork"—(so said Truth, from the speaking trumpet)—"also the surprising Model of the Silk Manufacture, from the Worm to the Consumer; where two hundred men, women, and children are seen in the busy attitude of work, equal to life, the whole being propelled by the astonishing power of Steam;" with many similar wonders, all "by Royal Authority, in the Largest Carawan travelling."

Leaving Nature and Art to settle as they might their jealous feud, I pursued my researches; and, passing several minor shows, came to the range of Dancing-booths. They were all large booths, open at one end; and I had time to observe them pretty minutely, as I pushed on, slowly, through the crowd. Their arrangements were simple and well contrived. A curtain about six feet high, drawn across, divided a sort of entrance from the ball-room beyond; concealing the dancers from the public gaze. The music and light from within overflowed the curtain; and, through the luminous haze above it, festoons, and flags, and fringes, (tawdry enough in themselves,) showed with a sort of dim beauty. In the entrance, in front of the curtain, a counter stood full in view, groaning under huge joints of cold meats—great loaves ready sliced—and battalions of bottles, glasses, plates, and mugs; between which at intervals, bunches of flowers, and pyramids of lemons, shone in alternate glory. In the space behind the counter stood a row of burly beer-barrels, ranging up from blank to an illegible number of X's; while overflowing hampers, great boxes half disgorged, and mighty stacks of loaves, backed up with assurance of inexhaustible renewal, the profusion displayed on the counter. It is impossible to conceive arrangements better calculated to entice John Bull; his imagination stirred by partial glimpses at the fun; his judgment convinced by ocular demonstration of the beef.

I entered the "Crown and Anchor," the largest of these booths. It was thronged with uproarious merry-makers—some pouring along in the full torrent of a tumultuous gallopade—some crowding with jovial faces the clattering supper-tables; while those who were neither dancing nor supping, gave vent to their exuberant hilarity in boisterous jokes. There were ladies tipping up gentlemen's hats from behind, and then scampering nimbly off; not without Parthian glances, provocative of pursuit. There were groups careering wildly along, flourishing bottles and glasses in their hands, like frantic bacchanalians. There were ladies in gentlemen's hats and *paletots*, strutting grotesquely; and gentlemen in ladies bonnets and shawls, ambling mincingly. Some, as they passed, blew squealing penny trumpets; some beat jangling tambourines; some, with just confidence, depended on their own throats for discord.

Suddenly a merry fellow, snatching a tambourine from a handsome young Jewess in purple velvet, dashed off at full speed with his prize, she following in hot pursuit. They tore along, careering through the dances, and over the supper-tables, and upsetting every body that came in their way—till at last he stumbled and fell, and she

over him, amidst a universal roar. In an instant the girl sprang nimbly to her feet; and, panting, waved the recovered tambourine triumphantly above her head.

During the storm of laughter and acclamation which ensued, I caught sight of a young girl, sitting apart at one of the supper tables, who instantly fixed my attention. She was of the Saxon type, slender and delicately formed, with pure blue eyes, and bright golden-yellow hair. Her bonnet swung by its loop in one hand; on the other she leant her head. There was an expression of weariness and melancholy on her face; which I had a vague impression of having seen somewhere before. She, on her part, seemed to be regarding me with fixed attention. This excited my interest even more than her golden beauty—which seemed to brighten the smoky atmosphere around her, like a gleam of country sunshine.

After a few moments' hesitation I approached her.

"Are you alone here?" I inquired.

"No, Sir," she said—"I came with two other girls. We have just had supper, and they are dancing again; but I am too tired, and too—too—"

"Too melancholy, I am afraid," said I, taking her hand.

"Well—perhaps.—You *do* remember me then?" she inquired, earnestly.

"I am sure I have seen you before—but I cannot tell where."

"No matter," she replied . . . "Only a year ago, and yet what a while it seems," she added musingly. "Down the sunny green lane, in the fresh autumn mornings . . . I used to hear the horses' feet before I could see you coming . . . and the little girl's merry voice calling to me to open the gate . . . oh! I should know it among a thousand.—She was your niece, wasn't she?"

"Niece!" The word touched chords of association which brought time—place—name—the whole truth, flashing at once on my mind. It was Susan Cleverly! Susan, the lodge-keeper's daughter at H—Wood, Wiltshire. I spent last autumn at my brother's house in the neighbourhood, and H—Wood Park was my niece's favourite ride.

"Susan Cleverly!" I exclaimed involuntarily.

She turned pale. "Hush! don't say that name here," said she, looking anxiously round—"I am Clara Seymour now."

For some moments I could not speak, for the pictures that came crowding on my mind. I saw her again, tripping blithely from her father's cottage—and standing, with her feet in the fern, as she held back the gate for us to pass . . . And again, as once we espied her, crossing a sunny glade, her hair tossing on the wind, her apron full of mushrooms, and her light carol mixed with the woodland music. . . . And again, as we passed her at sunset, on the bridge, peering into the ripple-fluted stream, and smiling to see the trout flash under, like broken gold . . . And again—

"Come along Seymour silly!" cried a gallopader as she passed. "Why don't you —"

The voice ceased, and the speaker vanished; sound and form born on together in the eddying dance.

"Have you been to H—— since?" enquired the poor girl with a trembling voice. "I don't know whether my father and mother are alive or dead. Oh!" she added, passionately, "if I could but see them once more—*once* more——"

"But you can—you shall——"

"NEVER!" she said, shuddering. "I shouldn't have the face to stand before them. *Her*, perhaps; but *him*—NEVER!"

Her eyes filled with tears. She rose hastily and put on her bonnet.

"Good night—good bye," she said with her face averted. Then, suddenly turning on me her streaming eyes, she added with a sad, wan smile, "I came here to forget—and you have made me remember."

So saying she hurried away. I did not seek to detain her. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and with such grief "a stranger intermeddleth not."

An hour afterwards I saw her bounding with extravagant vehemence in the thickest of the dance—her cheeks flushed with wine—her arms tossed aloft—her laughter ringing with the loudest,—and in her wandering eye a reckless, fiery flash, that made me tremble for her reason. Poor lost girl! She had plunged into that roaring tide of life, as a lethe to drown remorse; seeking in its bubbling whirlpools the waters of a brief oblivion.

Her parting words—"I came to forget"—haunted me; and her hollow mirth seemed to infect all the revelry with a frightful unreality. It seemed like the hideous festivity of sailors in a sinking ship—rioting downward to destruction; and I quitted the scene, appalled and feverish as from some ghastly dream.

I passed out into the cool air. The police men were clearing the fair; for it was midnight.

I looked up from the noisy throng below, to the silent multitude shining over head; Stella radiant in the midst.

Suddenly, a star fell. Its trail shone, silver, for a moment; then left all dark.

Two stars—the fixed, and the fallen!—two symbols—two destinies—two names! Susan Cleverly—Clara Seymour!

It was all clear to me in an instant: Nature is never obscure to the heart.

I joined the ebbing crowd, and soon found myself on the outskirts of the fair; amidst a crowd of road-side stalls and their keepers.

A little boy was sitting on a heap of shells near an oyster-barrow; and, as fast as the oyster-man threw down a shell, the boy picked it up and licked it. His age might be eight or nine years.

"Hard times, master," quoth the urchin, observing my regard, "when one's obliged to lick the taste out o' the shells."

"Haven't you had anything to eat, then?" said I.

"Not since breakfast at six o'clock." (It was then midnight.)

"What had you for breakfast?"

"Bread and butter."

"And what have you done all day?"

"I carried parcels at the Railway in the morning; and when I had 'arned sixpence, I come down to look at the fair."

"And how did you spend your sixpence?"

"I spent it wery foolish."

"How was that?"

"I thought I'd see the best — and I went in to Richardson's."

"And so spent the whole sixpence at once?"

"Yes — at one go. I spent it foolish, I know. But now my money's gone there aint no use grieving after it. I'm hungry — but I've seen the best. Oh cri! Bill, just look at them corn-trotters!"

"*'On est toujours millionnaire pour aller au bal,'*" thought I, "and, perhaps, more than one exquisite, returning from the opera to-night, has consoled himself, on his way home to his garret, in the very words of this urchin — '*I'm hungry — but I've seen the best.*'"

I gave the boy and his friend a stout supper of "corn-trotters," advising the young *millionaire* to look twice at his money next time; which, with an intense grin, he said I might "let him alone for."

And so ended my experiences at CAMBERWELL FAIR — TOWARDS MIDNIGHT.

F. O. W.

EPIGRAM

ON A CERTAIN EQUESTRIAN STATUE.

Whoever has looked upon Wellington's breast,
Knows well that he is not so full in the chest;
But the sculptor, to humour the Londoners partial,
Has turn'd the lean Duke to a plump City Marshal.

T. H.

SEPTEMBER.

BY ANDREW WINTER.

UPON the upland, slanting to the plain
(Gently as slants a bird with outstretch'd wings),
Dreaming, with half-closed lids, I listless lie.
The thistle downs float slowly past ; each seed,
Pendulous swaying from its parachute,
Skims lightly o'er the hindering blades of grass :
The purple heath-bells, sway'd by gentle gusts,
Knock timidly against my brow and cheek :
Whilst ever, in the amber fields below,
The flashing sickle, by brown Labour urged,
Gleams crescentwise through falling threads of corn.
Far off, along the tranquil landscape creeps
The smoke's thin azure from the stubble fires.
All's gentle motion and continual calm.
Oh, that the scene's content we could drink in !
With thirsty eyes and realising brow
I gaze, and it is gone ; just like some star,
That, in perusing, fades — to dreamy eyes.
The vividness returns. Westward I look.
The setting sun upon the hill's brim rests,
Shooting a golden weft along the ground.
In life-lines o'er the bosom of the steep
The sheep-tracks run, and ever from the sheep
Long shadows stream. Over the broken wall,
With bended knees, a ram leaps suddenly
And stares, tinkling at intervals the bell

Half muffled 'neath his woolly throat, full-brow'd
Between his rib-carved horns, firmly he stands;
And round him gather up the scatter'd flock,
Till like a cloud the whole drive swiftly past,
Seized with a panic fear. Upon the hills
And o'er the plain, still crowned, Summer sits;
But in the vale sad Autumn slowly steals.
How melancholy, in my homeward walk,
Between the avenue of limes, to see
The leaves fall undulating one by one,
And then upon the ground in eddies whirl!
There are no bees about, no busy drones
Curious within the painted chalices.
The sundial in the garden day by day
More idle seems. The pathway weedy grows;
And we do watch no more a favourite flower,
Counting the buds.

BALLADS AND BROADSIDES.

[CONCLUDED.]

"A world of tall lads,
That merry ditties troll'd, and ballads."—*Hudibras*.

LET any one who would enjoy a contrast take up one of the late excellent charges of Lord Chief Justice Tindal, and then peruse the following admirable specimen of cant and vulgar bullying. It was doubtless meant as a parade of piety, *inter alia*, but, —

"Though the holiest name is there,
Has more of blasphemy than prayer."

"THE
C H A R G E

GIVEN BY

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE JEFFERIES,

AT THE

CITY OF BRISTOL,

Monday, Sept. 21. 1685,

IN HIS RETURN FROM HIS WESTERN CAMPAIGNE.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I am, by the mercy of God, come to this great and populous City, a City that boasts both of its Riches and Trade, and may justly indeed claim the next place to the great and populous metropolis of this Kingdom. Gentlemen, I find here are a great many Auditors who are very intent, as if they expected some formal or prepared speech. But assure yourselves, we come not to make neither set speeches nor formal Declarations, nor to follow a couple of puffing Trumpeters; for, Lord! we have seen those things Twenty times before. No, we come to do the King's business; a King who is so gracious as to use all the means possible to discover the Disorders of the Nation, and to search out those who, indeed, are the very Pest of this Kingdom: to this end, and for this purpose, are we come to this City. But I find a special Commission is an unusual thing here, and relishes very ill; nay, the very Women storm at it, for fear we should take the upper hand of them too; for, by the by, Gentlemen, I hear it is much in fashion in this City for the Women to govern and bear sway. But, Gentlemen, I will not stay you with such needless Stories; I will only mention some few things that fall within my knowledge. For Points or Matters of Law I shall not trouble you, but only mind you of some things that lately hath happened, and particularly in this City (for I have the Kalender of this City in my pocket); and if I do not express myself in so formal or set a Declaration (for, as I told you, I came not to make Declamations), or in so smooth language as you may

expect, you must attribute it partly to the pain of the Stone, under which I labour, and partly to the unevenness of this day's journey.

"Gentlemen, I may say that even some of the youngest amongst us may remember the late horrid Rebellion, how men, under colour of Law and pretext of Justice, after they had divested a most Gracious and most Merciful Prince of all his Royal Power, by the Power of the sword; they, I say, under colour of Law and pretext of Justice (which added more to the crime, that it was done under the colour of such pretended Justice), brought the most Mild and Meekest Prince (next to our ever Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, if we may but compare him to a man) to die a Martyr, the first blessed Martyr, (pardon the expression; besides our most blessed Jesu, who suffered for us on the Cross, I say, besides that Blessed Son of God,) this, I say, was the first Royal Martyr; not suffering him to speak for himself, or make his defence; a Liberty which is given to the vilest Traitor; and this was done (not to descant on the number) by Forty one. The Rebels, not resting here, for Rebellion is like the sin of Witchcraft, Divested the Lineal, Legal, and Rightful Heir of the crown of all his Power and Prerogative, till the Mighty God of Heaven and Earth, God Almighty, restored him to his Just Right: And he, as if begot in Mercy, not only forgave all Offences, and pardoned, voluntarily, even all that had been in actual arms against him (excepting those accursed Regicides), but also made it a Crime for any one that should remember, or upbraid, any of their past crimes and Rebellions. Good God! O Jesu! that we should live in such an age, in which such a Prince cannot be safe from the seditious contrivances of Pardoned Rebels! Had we not the *Rye* Conspiracy, wherein they not only designed to have Murthered that Most Blessed (for so now we may conclude him to be with God Almighty) and Gracious King, but also his Most Ever Dear and Victorious Brother? Had we not the Bill of Exclusion, which our most Gracious King told us he could not, without a manifest infringement of the Royal prerogatives of the Crown (which are too sacred for us to touch) consent to? Had we not the Cursed Counsel of *Ahitophel*? Kings are God's Vicegerents on Earth, and are indeed Gods on Earth, and we represent them. Now when God Almighty had of his Infinite Goodness called this Blessed Prince unto himself, he sends a Prince, who assures us he will imitate his Royal Brother and Renowned Predecessor in all things, especially in that of his Clemency and Mercy, and that, too, upon the word of a King. A King, I will assure you, that will not be worse than his Word. Nay (Pardon the Expression) that dare not be worse than his Word. Which of you all that had a father murdered by another, (and that deliberately too, under colour of Justice, which added to the Crime; and your Brother, nay yourselves, thrust out from your inheritance, and banished from your Country; nay that sought your Blood likewise,) would not, when it was in your power, revenge such Injuries, and ruin such Persecutors. But here our most blessed Prince, whom God long preserve, hath not only forgiven, but will venture his Life for the Defence of such his Enemies! Has he not ventured his Life already, as far as any man, for the Honour of these Kingdoms? Nay, I challenge this City to

show me any one man of it, that perchance may not be worth a Groat, that has ventured his life so far for the safety of these Kingdoms as this Royal Prince hath done. Good God! what an Age do we live in! Shall not such a Prince be secure from the Sedition, Rebellion, and Plots of Men? He is scarce seated on his Royal Throne (where God Almighty grant he may long reign), but on the one hand he is invaded by a Condemned Rebel and Arch-traytor, who hath received the just reward of his Rebellion. On the other hand up starts a Poppet Prince, who seduces the Mobile into Rebellion, into which they are easily bewitched; for I say, Rebellion is like the sin of Witchcraft; this man, who had as little Title to the Crown as the least of you (for I hope all you are Legitimate), being overtaken by Justice, and by the goodness of his Prince brought to the scaffold, he has the confidence (good God! that men should be so impudent) to say, *That God Almighty did know with what joyfulness he did die* (a Traytor); having for these two years past lived in all Incontinency and Rebellion, notwithstanding the goodness of an Indulgent Prince so often to pardon him; but it is just like him. Rebellion (as I told you) is like the sin of Witchcraft. For there was another, which I shall not name, because I will not trample on the dust of the dead, but you may remember him by the words of his Speech; he tells you, *That he thanks his God that he falls by the Ax, and not by the Fiery Trial*. He had rather (he had as good have said) die a Traytor than a Blessed Martyr.

“Great God of Heaven and Earth! what reason have men to Rebel! But, as I told you, Rebellion is like the sin of Witchcraft; *Fear God and Honour the King*, is rejected by People for no other Reason, as I can find, but that it is written in *St. Peter*. Gentlemen, I must tell you, I am afraid that this City hath too many of these People in it. And it is your Duty to search them out; for this City added much to that Ship's Loading. There was your *Tyly's*, your *Roe's*, and your *Wade's-men*, started up like Mushrooms, Scoundrel Fellows, mere Sons of Dunghills; these men must, forsooth, set up for Liberty and Property. A Fellow that carries the Sword before Mr. *Maier* must be very careful of his Property, and turn Politician, as if he had as much Property as the person before whom he bears the Sword; though perchance not worth a Groat. Gentlemen, I must tell you, you have still here the *Tyly's*, the *Roe's*, and the *Wade's*. I have brought a Brush in my Pocket, and I shall be sure to rub the dirt wherever it is, or on whomsoever it sticks. Gentlemen, I shall not stand complementing with you; I shall talk with some of you before you and I part: I tell you, I tell you, I have brought a Besome, and I will sweep every Man's door, whether great or small. Must I mention Particulars? I hope you will save me that trouble; yet I will hint a few things to you, that perchance I have heard of. This is a great City, and the Magistrates wonderful Loyal, and very forward to assist the King with Men, Money, and Provisions when the Rebels were just at your Gates. I do believe it would have went very hard with some of you if the Enemy had entered the City, notwithstanding the endeavours that was used to accomplish it. Certainly they had, and must have, great encouragement from a Party within, or else why should

their design be on this City; nay, when the Enemy was within a mile of you, that a Ship should be set of fire in the midst of you as a Signal to the Rebels, and to amuse those within; when, if God Almighty had not been more gracious unto you than you was to yourselves (so that Wind and Tyde was for you), for what I know, the greatest part of this City had perished: and yet you are willing to believe it was Accident. Certainly here is a great many of those men which they call *Trimmers*. A *Whig* is but a meer Fool to these, for a *Whig* is some sort of a subject in comparison of these; for a *Trimmer* is but a Cowardly and base spirited *Whig*; for the *Whig* is but the Journeyman-'prentice, that is hired, and set on in the Rebellion, whilst the *Trimmer* is afraid to appear in the Cause: he stands at a doubt, and says to himself, I will not assist the King until I see who has the best of it; and refuses to entertain the King's Friends for fear the Rebels should get the better of it. These men stink worse than the worst dirt you have in your City; these men have so little Religion, that they forget that he that is not for us is against us.

"Gentlemen, I tell you I have the Kalender of this City here in my hand. I have heard of those that have searched into the very sink of a conventicle to find out some sneaking Rascal to hide their money by night. Come, come, Gentlemen, to be plain with you, I find the dirt of the Ditch is in your Nostrils. Good God! where am I? In *Bristol*! This city, it seems, claims the Privilege of Hanging and Drawing amongst themselves. I find you have more need of a Commission once a month at least. The very Magistrates, which should be the Ministers of Justice, fall out one with another to that degree, they will scarce dine with each other; whilst it is the business of some cunning men that lie behind the curtain to raise Divisions amongst them, and set them together by the Ears, and knock their Logger-heads together; yet I find they can agree for their Interest. Or if there be but a Kid in the case; for I hear the Trade of Kid-napping is of much Request in this City, they can discharge a Felon, or a Traytor, provided they will go to Mr. Alderman's Plantation at the *West Indies*. Come, come, I find you stink for want of Rubbing. Gentlemen, what need I mind you of these things? I hope you will search into them, and inform me. It seems the Dissenters and Phanaticks fare well amongst you, by reason of the favour of the Magistrates; for example, if a Dissenter, who is a Notorious and Obstinate Offender, comes before them to be fined, one Alderman or other stands up and says, He is a good man (though three parts a Rebel); well then, for the sake of Mr. Alderman, he shall be fined but 5s. Then comes another, and up stands another Goodman Alderman, and says, I know him to be an honest man (though rather worse than the former), Well, for Mr. Alderman's sake, he shall be Fined but half-a-crown; so *Manus manum fricat*, You play the Knave for me now, and I will play the Knave for you by and by. I am ashamed of these things. And I must not forget to tell you, that I hear of some differences amongst the Clergy, those that ought to Preach Peace and Unity to others: Gentlemen, these things must be looked into. I shall not now trouble you any further; there are

several other things, but I expect to hear them from you. And if you do not tell me some of these things, I shall remind you of them. And I find, by the Number of your Constables, this is a very large City, and it is impossible for one or two to search into all the corners of it; therefore mind the Constables of their Duties, and call on them for their Presentments; for I expect every Constable to bring in his Presentment, or that you Present him. So Adjourn, &c.

“Finis.”

Upon Affidavits read, and other Evidence against *Sir William Haymand*, the Mayor, Alderman *Lawford* and others, for Kid-napping, there being Bills privately preferred to the Grand Jury by *John Rumsey*, and being found, he made the Mayor and the Aldermen concerned to go from the Bench to the Bar to plead to the Informations; using many expressions, saying of the Mayor, “See how the kid-napping Rogue looks, &c.”

Here we have the Lord Chief Justice in his pride of place, with his star in the ascendant, soon to culminate in the office of Lord High Chancellor, and as rapidly to fall, as appears by

“A full Account of the Apprehending of the LORD CHANCELLOR, in Wapping; As he was designing to make his escape; As also the Manner how he was brought before the Lord Mayor; and from thence committed to the *Tower*, *December 12. 88.*

“It is a generally receiv’d Maxim in this Kingdom, That no man struggl’d with the Laws of *England*, but he got a Fall: of which you have now a great example in the present Lord of *Wemm*, Lord Chancellor of *England*, who, ambitious of Honour and Grandeur, baulk’d at no violation of the Ancient and Fundamental Laws of this Realm to twist himself into exorbitant Power. His bold and Lofty Deportment, when Chief Justice, and his Domineering Pride, when Lord Chancellor, are too well known, and he is now become himself an example, That Breach of Law in *England* is but a Sandy Foundation. For after all his Ranting Vain-Glory and Imperious Pomp, finding *White-Hall* too hot to hold him, he was forced to quit his glorious Purse and Mace, and so slunk away, with a Resolution to leave the Nation, which he had Disturb’d with his pernicious Counsels; and to avoid the Reward of his Misdeeds, by seeking Shelter in a Foreign Climate: For Flight, by the Law of *England*, always implies Guilt.

“To this Purpose, laying aside his Gold Frog-Button Gown, he put himself into the Habit of a Seaman, with a Fur-Cap, instead of his Beaver and Diamond-Buckl’d Hat-Band; and for the present took Sanctuary in *Anchor and Hope Alley*, perhaps, because he thought there might be some kind of Spell in the Sign, and willing still to have Hope for his Friend, lest his Heart should break. There he sent for the Master of a Collier to bargain with him for the Hire of his Vessel to carry him beyond Sea, out of Harnes Way.

“But the Mate, more cunning than the Master, smelt a Rat, and full of Suspensions, goes and informs the Headborough of the Place, of the whole matter: Who, considering the present Condition of Affairs, resolv’d to see whether it were a Man or a Mouse, who was making such haste out of the Kingdom. And so taking his Staff of Authority:

went to the House in *Anchor and Hope Alley* aforesaid, in the Hamlet of *Wapping* aforesaid; and going up Stairs, found a certain Person in Seaman's Habit, as aforesaid, laid upon a Bedd, between two Blankets, (without any other *Wapping* Accommodation, so far as we can hear of, for his Spirits were low,) upon which, whether it were by Instinct, or by some Private Whisper of my Lord's Fate in his Ear, he gave him a broad-side Question, and ask'd him, whether he were not the Lord Chancellor or no? To which the Man between the Blankets reply'd, *He was*. With that the Headborough thought it his Duty to apprehend his Lordship; and so having seiz'd him, carry'd him to one Captain *Jones's* House, a Master of a Ship, till he could get a Coach and more assistance, and then brought him to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor's House in *Grocer's Alley*. It is not to be imagined what a Train his Lordship had to attend him, all the way from the Place, where he was taken; which caused a great Fear in his Lordship; and made him earnestly desire the Headborough, To secure him from the Fury of the People, not valuing the Expence of his Protection, whatever it might be. Upon which there was a Person ordered all the way to sit in his Lap before him, to receive the Mire and Dirt, if the Mobile should prove unmannerly.

"When he was brought to *Grocer's Hall*, the Multitude that follow'd him, fill'd all the Court to that degree, that there was no going in or out: To whom the Lord Mayor, appearing from his Balcony, deliver'd himself in few words to this Purpose, *That he desir'd them to let him but have free Passage to and fro, to his own House, and he would take care to acquaint the Lords of the Council, that they might have Justice done, and a good Account of their Prisoner*. And these Words his Lordship was forc'd to repeat twice, by reason of the Noise below in the Yard. From thence the Lord Chancellour was sent to the Tower; where we leave him at present to his own serious Thoughts and Considerations.

"Finis."

The next takes the "Lord Chancellour" up where the last leaves him.

"O Rara Show, A Rara Sight!"

A STRANGE MONSTER,

(The like not in *Europe*.)

TO BE SEEN NEAR TOWER-HILL, A FEW DOORS BEYOND THE LIONS DEN.

"It hath the shape of a Man, but in its nature is a meer Savage Beast; looks as fierce as a Tyger, but has scarce the Courage of a Mouse. It has vast Lungs, but no Heart; has wild gogling Eyes, but they are very short-sighted: It has a huge ravenous Mouth, but that being an *open Sepulchre of Religion and Law*, and having the *Poison of Malice under its Lips*, sends forth a Breath very offensive. It hates all other Creatures, and delights much in their Blood, but is very fearful of seeing its own. It has fed so much for five Years last past upon

blood and Corruption, that it looks as ghastly as *Envy* and *Despair* without, and is as black as *Hell* within.

“ An Account of the Birth and Growth of this Monster.

“ It was whelp'd and bred in *Wales*, where it ate so much Goat's Milk, that it has been very subject of late Years to have Horns sprout forth of its Head. It gave early proofs of a hardy substantial Impudence, and was never known to blush, tho' sometimes to look pale. Its peculiar Talent appear'd to be *yelling* aloud ; and that by a wealthy citizen's means, preferr'd it to be the *common Barker of Guild-hall*, and afterwards to be the *Foul Mouth of the City*, in which place it continu'd, till having confederated with some *Wolves*, and prey'd upon some *Sheep Skins* that contain'd the *City Charter*, three or four hundred Men from *Westminster* hunted it from thence. But this Vertue of Falsehood to its Trust soon advanc'd it to be chief *Inquisitor* of the Nation, and then it and its confederate *Wolves* fell upon the old *Sheep Skins* in the *Tower*, and devour'd *Magna Charta*. And now it rang'd into the *Western Forest*, attended with *Jack-calls*, to hunt down its Game, and was so ravenous, that if great quantities of Gold and Silver had not been chuck'd into its Mouth, to blunt the Edg of its Teeth, and fill its Maw, it was thought it would have suck'd up the Blood of the whole Country. At its return, this *Monster* was dignified with a fine *Collar* and a *Pouch*, to the great Dishonour and Scandal of both ; and was trusted with the Custody of a certain *large Conscience*, for which it was a proper *Keeper*, and had room enough, having none of its own. It expos'd this conscience to sale for three years together, and to such as would give its own lusty Price, it retail'd it pretty civilly ; but at such as begg'd any, or offer'd an under-rate, it roar'd hideously, even to the disturbance of the whole Neighbourhood.

“ The *Great and Brave Monster-Hunter* of *Europe* being arriv'd in *England* to hunt here, our Monster dropp'd its gay Trap-pings, and creeping into poor Weeds, resolv'd (contrary to its fearful Temper) to take the Water in hope to escape ; but Nature recoyling at the danger, it first sneaked into a little Ale-house to fortify itself with a Noggin of *Brandy*, whither it was trac'd by its strong Scent of *Man's Blood*, and deliver'd to the *Masters* of the *Game* to be kept for the Chase.

“ It is agreed to give this Monster *fair Law*, tho' it never gave any to other Creatures ; but it is fear'd the weight of its Paunch will disable it for leaping over the Toils, and that it will run its head into a *Noose*.

“ The Price is Two Pence for each *Spectator* ; but they are desired not to delay time, for it will not be to be seen in this place above a Month or Six Weeks longer.

“ Licensed and Entered according to Order.”

R. Janeway, 1689.”

ENSIGN SIMMONDS, OF THE TENTH.

BY R. SHELTON MACKENZIE, LL. D.

AUTHOR OF "TITIAN."

WHEN railway travelling was undreamt of, and mail-coaches—like poor Sir John Moore in his narrow bed—were "alone in their glory," the ancient and sooty town of Sheffield rejoiced in an inhabitant, named Mr. Samuel Peach. To have enquired for him, however, by *that* appellation would have been next to useless. Not only in Sheffield but through the length and breadth of the three Ridings of Yorkshire, he was known and familiarly spoken of as "Sam Peach, of the Tontine Coach-office."

Eccentric in many things, yet with a dash of broad humour and a most catholic spirit of humanity in his nature, was this same Sam Peach. He was wealthy of course, for eccentricity is too great a luxury for the poor to indulge in. Of the importance of his position—as Autocrat of all the mail and stage coaches which travelled to and from Sheffield—he had a high opinion. Not having any connexion with the Statistical Society, we cannot state, with the requisite fulness and particularity, how many of these coaches he possessed,—how many horses he had "on the road,"—to how many families his calling gave bread,—nor how many miles *per diem* his carriages travelled over. Enough for the purposes of this story is it to say that Sam Peach, engrossing all of the "conveyancing department" in and from Sheffield, was considered a very wealthy personage,—the rather, perhaps, because he studiously avoided the appearance of riches. He had purchased some land in the neighbourhood of Sheffield, sufficiently extensive to be called an estate. He always spoke of it as "The Farm," though the house he had erected thereon was a mansion of sufficiently imposing appearance and extent to make it look like the country-seat of one of the squirearchy. With *that* "order" Sam Peach had no desire to be identified. Plain, and somewhat *brusque* in his manner, he was proud of the business by which he had acquired an independence, and it is yet remembered as a fact that, on one occasion, when a distinguished commoner in the neighbourhood of Sheffield (since become a peer, and a cabinet minister,) addressed him as "Samuel Peach, *Esquire*," the recipient, who knew the writing, returned it with an endorsement, "Not known at the Tontine Coach Office."

Wealth and integrity, despite of the eccentricity we have mentioned, had made Sam Peach quite a popular character in Sheffield. But never did any one less care for popularity. His line of conduct was, to pursue the right whatever should betide. His very peculiarities "leaned to mercy's side." It was as much as any of his coachmen's place was worth for one of them to see a tired foot-traveller on the road, and not instantly "pull up" and invite the wayfarer to a seat. The character of the man may be best estimated from the fact that most of those around him had been in his employment for upwards of twenty years.

Of the name and system of Lavater, it is more than probable that Sam Peach had never heard, and yet it is certain that he had a habit of taking likes and dislikes to people's faces, which involved the putting them "inside for outside fare," or for no fare, or the stout refusal to take them inside or outside of any of his coaches at any price.

It happened that, one sunny morning in September, 1815, Sam Peach was sitting in his coach-office, "his custom always of an afternoon,"—for he used to say that by attending to business, he was pretty sure of business attending to him,—and engaged in examining a ledger. A gentleman came in and asked what was the coach-fare to London? The clerk, with his pen across his mouth, after the fashion of persons who would fain appear excessively busy, answered, "One pun' fifteen *out*; two pun' ten *in*." The traveller desired to be booked for an outside place, if there were room. "Not one seat taken," said the book-keeper. "I suppose I had better pay here?" enquired the traveller. "Just as *you* please," was the reply; "only, until we have the money, you neither put foot into the coach, nor on it."

The money was accordingly disbursed out of a not very plethoric purse.

"What name?" asked the booking-clerk.

"What name!" echoed the traveller.

"Ay, what name are we to book you by?"

"I beg your pardon," said the traveller, with a smile, "but I have been for some years where a man's name was the last question put to him. Put me down Ensign Simmonds, of the Tenth."

Mr. Simmonds was duly entered in the book, and thence in the way-bill?

Indeed he was not!

The moment that the traveller had described himself as "Ensign Simmonds, of the Tenth," Sam Peach closed the big ledger with an emphasis which sounded not unlike a pistol-shot,—pushed the fat booking-clerk aside,—took his place, with a countenance quite radiant with excitement,—and, in his blindest tone, asked what name he should enter in the day-book?

"Ensign Simmonds, of the Tenth!"

"Well!" said Sam, in the subdued manner of a person holding a confidential conversation with himself. "Well, my ears did not deceive me. What a singular thing this is!" Then, addressing Mr. Simmonds, he said, "In the army, sir?"

"Why, considering that I bear His Majesty's commission, I think I may say that I am."

"Seen any actual service?"

"Yes. Two years in the Peninsula, and in the last brush with the French at Waterloo."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Sam Peach. "Got a Waterloo Medal?"

"Ay, and a wound. Indeed I have been at home since my return, getting cured, and now that I am on my legs again, I am off to town to report myself at the Horse Guards as fit for duty. Our second battalion is to be disbanded, and as we are likely to have a long peace, I shall have some difficulty in getting upon full pay in another regiment."

"Then," said Sam Peach, rather anxiously, "I suppose you are not bound to be at the Horse Guards by any particular day?"

Mr. Simmonds replied that he was not.

"That being the case, sir," said Sam Peach, "it can't make any great difference your not being able to travel by any of my coaches this afternoon."

"Not go! after paying for my seat!"

"Afraid not. All the seats are engaged."

Here the fat book-keeper chimed in with, "Not one of them.— Only look at the way-bill."

But Sam Peach pushed the officious clerk away, declaring that he was "a stupid, who did not know what he was saying." Then, resuming his conversation with Mr. Simmonds, he added, "The fact is, sir, all the seats *are* engaged. But, as you have paid your fare, I am bound to make the delay of no loss to you. My residence is within a few miles of the town. I shall feel gratified at your coming out to dine with me to-day. In the morning I shall drive you in, if you like, and you can start for town by any coach you please."

Vainly did Mr. Simmonds assure Sam Peach that he had much rather proceed to London without delay — that he did not wish to intrude upon his hospitality — that he would prefer remaining at the Tontine. Vainly, too, did he endeavour to ascertain, when it was evident there was no real impediment to his immediate journey to London, why Sam Peach should wish to detain him. But Sam, as if determined to play the host, steadily declined giving any explanation; and the result was, that, at six o'clock that afternoon, Mr. Simmonds found himself at Sam Peach's table, discussing what any gentleman, even if he had not campaigned in the Peninsula and had hospital fare at Brussels after the day of Waterloo, would be justified in considering an excellent dinner.

Such a thing as "taking the pledge" (except at the Lombard Arms) was not thought of at that time, and therefore a capital glass of wine did them no essential harm. Much they talked, — Ensign Simmonds of the adventures he had met with while on foreign service, and Sam Peach, who was a capital listener, pleasantly keeping up the ball, by occasional shrewd questions and racy remarks. At last, — but this was about the conclusion of the second bottle of that incomparable port, which tasted like nectar and smelt like a bouquet —

am Peach grew communicative about himself; told how he had risen to opulence, by industry, from a small commencement: and boasted how, far above his wealth, he prized his only daughter. You shall see her in the morning," said he, "for I did not like to introduce you, until I saw whether my first impressions would be confirmed on closer acquaintance. It is not every one, I can tell you, at I would introduce as my friend to my daughter Mary."

A capital breakfast, the next morning; and not the less pleasant cause pretty Mary Peach presided at the board, assisted (as her mother had been dead for many years) in such social duties, by a maiden aunt, who was neither skinny nor shrewish.

"Pleasant weather!" observed Sam. "Are you much of a sportsman?"

"Rather," said Mr. Simmonds. "We had plenty of practice at the red-legged partridges on the Peninsula. You should have seen how Lord Wellington peppered them, when he had nothing else to do."

"Well," answered Sam, "unfortunately I had not the chance of seeing him. I think you said that you are not exactly tied to time as your being in London, and if you would only make up your mind not to start until to-morrow, there's a famous Joe Manton in the mill, and I happen to own the preserve across yonder valley, and tell you that not a gun has been fired there this season."

So Mr. Simmonds remained for that day? To be sure he did, fancy a young man of five-and-twenty, who had been on foreign service for three years,—with a heart beating quick and fast within his bosom, and (at that time) not engaged on any particular love affair. Fancy him, thrown into the constant society of Mary Peach, really a pretty, if not quite a beautiful girl,—pressed to make the place his home as long as he pleased,—and the quarters surprisingly comfortable. Fancy all this, and wonder if you can, at Mr. Simmonds quite forgetting that he ever had disbursed "one pun' fifteen" for the outside fare to London. And then there were such beautiful snatches of scenery all along that Glossop Road which Mary Peach recommended him to look at, and which she kindly accompanied him to, as he might not be able to find them out without her assistance,—and she had so much to ask, and he to tell about foreign countries, and the perils he had been in,—and she made him tell her, gain and again, how he got his wound at Waterloo,—and she had such a pretty way of seeming to *listen* with her dark, grey eyes,—and—but I need not go on. It was a clear case.

Then there were sighs, the deeper for suppression,
And stolen glances, sweeter for the theft.

In short, it had come to pass that Mr. Simmonds had a palpitation of the heart whenever Mary Peach spoke to him or looked at him.

In love with her, I dare say?

Exactly so.

Oh! I know how it will end—a scene with the lady—a blush or two—half a dozen tears, and a whispered "Speak to my father!"

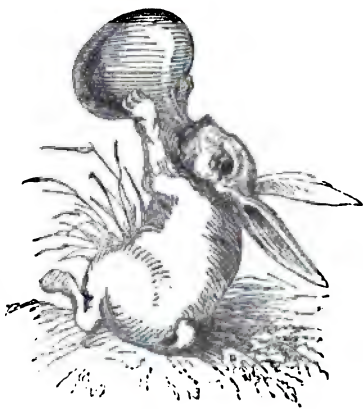
No ; when our hero found that he was in love, he took the opportunity of speaking to Sam Peach before he mentioned a word of the matter to the lady.

He was in a precious passion, no doubt?

Wrong again. He told Mr. Simmonds that he had been expecting something of the kind, for lookers-on see more of the game than the players ; that, under this expectation, he had made enquiries as to Mr. Simmonds's family and prospects, was satisfied with the former, and should be glad to improve the latter, and that if he could obtain the lady's consent, no man upon earth would be more acceptable as a son-in-law.

Shortly after, Mr. Simmonds and Mary Peach were united—*she* being too good a daughter to decline giving an acceptable son-in-law to her father. What fortune she had, was never exactly known, but they drove off from church in a handsome chariot and four, which Sam Peach had presented to "the happy couple," and, just as the bridegroom was about stepping into the vehicle, where sat the bride, all beauty and blonde, Sam Peach delivered himself as follows :—

"Simmonds, you never asked me what I saw in you, when we first met, to bring you home and take a fancy to you. Know, then, that in the five-and-thirty years I have been at the head of the coaching in Sheffield, I have had hundreds of military men in my office, booking for places. Generals, colonels, majors, and a crowd of captains, but *you* were the only ENSIGN that ever came across me. For the singularity of the thing, I thought that phenomenon worthy of a good dinner ; and your own good qualities have done the rest. Good bye, now, and let us hear from you and Mary every day."



CONEY AC.

MARY SCHWEIDLER, THE AMBER WITCH.

THE MOST INTERESTING TRIAL FOR WITCHCRAFT EVER KNOWN. —
PRINTED FROM AN IMPERFECT MANUSCRIPT BY HER FATHER. —
EDITED BY W. MEINHOLD, DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY, PASTOR, ETC.

A most curious and deeply interesting, — indeed, in a psychological point of view, most important subject of inquiry, is that of witchcraft. No belief has been so universal as this ; no other superstition has cast its dark shadow over so many ages and so many countries. The most learned and the most ignorant have alike yielded unhesitating assent to its truth ; men holding the most opposite political opinions, the most diverse religious creeds, — Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, have all met here on common ground. Indeed, although the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were most distinguished for their belief in witchcraft, and the persecutions then far surpassed in extent and wild cruelty those of any other age, still we shall scarcely find a period, from the earliest records of man, when a belief in Satanic possession and agency was unknown. And most curious is it to find, that amid all the differences of age, country, religion, and social arrangements, this belief was substantially the same, — modified by circumstances, indeed, like the dress or customs of the people, but the same in its grand outlines, like human nature itself. We find the magic song of Thessaly re-echoed in the “Runic rhyme,” and are startled to find the old crone, who never wandered ten miles beyond her native village, using the same charm, compounding the same potion, as the witch of classical times, or the still more ancient Egyptian.

Among the many desiderata of the learned world, a good history of witchcraft may well be placed. Such a work would indeed require the labour of a lifetime, but it would be a work which for deep and appalling interest would have few rivals. The subject of witchcraft appears to have lately excited much attention in Germany, and the little work before us is offered by Dr. Meinhold as a contribution towards its history.

Abraham Schweidler, the pastor of Coserow, in the island of Usedom, an aged widower with one fair daughter, on whose education he had bestowed much pains, even teaching her Latin and Greek, is reduced to great poverty during the Thirty Years’ war, through the plunder of the Imperial army. “Coffers, chests, closets, were all plundered and broken in pieces, and my surplice also was torn, so that I remained in great distress and tribulation, with not one dust of

flour, nor one grain of corn, nor one morsel of meat even of a finger's length, left, and I knew not how I should longer support my own life, or that of my poor child." In this extremity he asks aid in vain from the sheriff of the district, and he would have perished from want if Hinrich Seden had not begged for him and obtained "five loaves, two sausages, a goose, and a fitch of bacon." For this kindness the old man however prayed his pastor "to shield him from his wife,"

— "who would have had half for herself, and when he denied her she cursed him, and wished him gout in his head; whereupon he straightway felt a pain in his right cheek, and it was quite hard and heavy already. At such shocking news I was afrighted, as became a good pastor, and asked whether peradventure he believed that she stood in evil communication with Satan, and could bewitch folks? But he said nothing, and shrugged his shoulders. So I sent for old Lizzie to come to me, who was a tall, meagre woman of about sixty, with squinting eyes, so that she could not look any one in the face; likewise with quite red hair, and indeed her goodman had the same. But though I diligently admonished her out of God's word, she made no answer until at last I said, 'Wilt thou unbewitch thy goodman (for I saw from the window how that he was raving in the street like a madman), or wilt thou that I should inform the magistrate of thy deeds?' then, indeed, she gave in, and promised that he should soon be better (and so he was); moreover she begged that I would give her some bread and some bacon, inasmuch as it was three days since she had had a bit of anything to put between her lips, saving always her tongue. So my daughter gave her half a loaf, and a piece of bacon about two hands-breadths large; but she did not think it enough, and muttered between her teeth; whereupon my daughter said, 'If thou art not content, thou old witch, go thy ways and help thy goodman; see how he has laid his head on Zabel's fence, and stamps with his feet for pain.' Whereupon she went away, but still kept muttering between her teeth, 'Yea, forsooth, I will help him and thee too.'"

Soon after, the pastor's sole remaining cow drops down dead, and worse, another troop of Imperialists enter the district; so he and his flock retire to the woods, from whence they see their village in flames. While in the woods, their sufferings are increased by seeing "the deer and wild boars run past us, when we would so gladly have had them, but there was neither a grain of powder or musket left in the whole parish." In this farther extremity he determines to write to a neighbouring pastor for aid from his parishioners, and returning to his cottage, "having scraped some soot from the chimney and mixed it with water, I tore a blank leaf out of 'Virgilius,' and wrote." This letter produces but little, only six loaves, a sheep, and some apples; so he again ventures to write to the churlish sheriff, which he does upon the only remaining blank leaf of his daughter's "Virgilius." In writing, unfortunately,

"A huge blot fell upon my paper; for the windows being boarded up, the room was dark, and but little light came through two small panes of glass, which I had broken out of the church, and stuck in between the boards: this, perhaps, was the reason why I did not see better. However, as I could not any where get another piece of paper, I let it pass, and ordered the maid, whom I sent with the letter to Pudgla, to excuse the same to his lordship the Sheriff, the which she promised to do; seeing that I could not add a word more on the paper, as it was written all over. I then sealed it as I had done before.

"But the poor creature came back trembling for fear, and bitterly weeping, and said that his lordship had kicked her out of the castle-gate, and had threatened to

set her in the stocks if she ever came before him again. 'Did the parson think that he was as free with his money as I seemed to be with my ink? I surely had water enough to celebrate the Lord's Supper wherewithal.'

In great distress the poor pastor meets his starving flock on the Sunday, and relates to them how the sheriff had refused them relief. This is told to him, and from henceforth "his lordship" becomes the bitter enemy of pastor Schweidler. Meanwhile the famine continues, and his daughter Mary gradually sinks under it; so at length he determines to leave his parish, "and beg our way to Hamburgh." From this his daughter dissuades him, and, rejoiced at the unexpected gift of "two loaves, a piece of meat, a bag of oatmeal, and a bag of salt," she cheers up her father, calls for the little children whom she was accustomed to instruct, and feeds them, bidding him take no thought for the morrow. In the afternoon Mary went up the Strec-kelberg to seek for blackberries.

"The maid was chopping wood in the yard, to which end she had borrowed old Paasch his axe, for the Imperialist thieves had thrown away mine, so that it could nowhere be found; and I myself was pacing up and down in the room, meditating my sermon; when my child, with her apron full, came quickly in at the door, quite red and with beaming eyes, and scarce able for joy to say more than 'Father, father, what have I got?' 'Well,' quoth I, 'what hast thou got, my child?' Whereupon she opened her apron, and I scarce trusted my eyes when I saw, instead of the blackberries which she had gone to seek, two shining pieces of amber, each nearly as big as a man's head, not to mention the small pieces, some of which were as large as my hand, and that, God knows, is no small one. 'Child of my heart,' cried I, 'how cam'st thou by this blessing from God?' As soon as she could fetch her breath, she told me as follows:—

"That while she was seeking for blackberries in a dell near the shore, she saw somewhat glistening in the sun, and on coming near, she found this wondrous Godsend, seeing that the wind had blown the sand away from off a black vein of amber."

The overwhelming joy of the poor father at this most unlooked-for good fortune is very naïvely described, and his journey to Wolgast to sell the precious amber for 500 florins, and the many things they bought, and the "hair-net and scarlet silk bodice, and fine pair of ear-rings," which Mary coaxed him to buy, are all told at length, and also how they shoved two loaves in at a poor man's door, who had been kind to them, and how, the next morning, on their return, "my daughter cut up the blessed bread, and sent to every one in the village a good large piece."

The pastor now begins to prosper. He hires a man servant, purchases a cart and two horses, and on his journey to purchase these, meets with a young nobleman, whom he invites to lodge for the night at his house, and who greatly admires his daughter. Ere long, however, "my Lord Wittich, the sheriff," comes into the neighbourhood wolf-hunting, and catches a sight of the pastor's fair daughter. Next day, "old Seelen's squint-eyed wife" comes with proposals from the sheriff for her to go into service with him as housekeeper. This she refuses vehemently.

"This, however, did not seem to anger him, but, after he had talked a long time to no purpose, he took leave quite kindly, like a cat which pretends to let a mouse go, and creeps behind the corners, but she is not in earnest, and presently springs out upon it again. For doubtless he saw that he had set to work stupidly; wherefore he went away in order to begin his attack again after a better fashion, and Satan went with him, as whilom with Judas Iscariot."

During the winter the parish was quiet; and toward spring the pastor lent money to several of the peasants to buy corn with; "and we sent seven waggons to Friedland, to fetch seed-corn for us all." The pastor was, indeed, now a rich man; for, besides the 500 florins, 700 more had been obtained for amber. Meanwhile, a murrain breaks out among the cows and swine, and the pastor's daughter is prayed, when Zabel's red cow appears dying, "to pluck three hairs from its tail, and bury them under the threshold of the stall." This she does; and as the cow recovers, her aid is frequently asked to perform this silly but greatly valued charm. But success did not always attend her; so the people now begin to look suspectingly upon her. Unfortunately, she had been seen early in the morning on the Streckelberg, for

"Neither did I forbid her to take these walks, for there were no wolves now left on the Streckelberg; and even if there had been, they always fly before a human creature in the summer season. Howbeit, I forbade her to dig for amber. For as it now lay deep, and we knew not what to do with the earth we threw up, I resolved to tempt the Lord no further, but to wait till my store of money grew very scant before we would dig any more.

"But my child did not do as I had bidden her, although she had promised she would, and of this her disobedience came all our misery. (Oh, blessed Lord, how grave a matter is thy holy fourth commandment!) For as his reverence Johannes Lampius, of Crummin, who visited me this spring, had told me that the Cantor of Wolgast wanted to sell the *opp. St. Augustini*, and I had said before her that I desired above all things to buy that book, but had not money enough left, she got up in the night without my knowledge to dig for amber, meaning to sell it as best she might at Wolgast, in order secretly to present me with the *opp. St. Augustini* on my birthday, which falls on the 28th *mensis Augusti*. She had always covered over the earth she cast up with twigs of fir, whereof there were plenty in the forest, so that no one should perceive any thing of it."

Soon after, old Seelen was missing; and, as some of his hair was found upon the Streckelberg, and Mary Schweidler was seen there, they began to watch, to find out wherefore she went. Meantime, the joyful news came that the great Gustavus Adolphus "was coming to the aid of poor persecuted Xtendom," and that he would pass direct through Coserow.

"Straightway I resolved in my joy to invent a *carmen gratulatorium* to his Majesty, whom, by the grace of Almighty God, I was to see, the which my little daughter might present to him.

"I accordingly proposed it to her as soon as I got home, and she straightway fell on my neck for joy, and then began to dance about the room. But when she had considered a little, she thought her clothes were not good enough to wear before his Majesty, and that I should buy her a blue silk gown, with a yellow apron, seeing that these were the Swedish colours, and would please his Majesty right well. For a long time I would not, seeing that I hate this kind of pride;

at she teased me with her kisses and coaxing words, till I, like an old fool, said yes, and ordered my ploughman to drive her over to Wolgast to-day to buy the stuff. Wherefore I think that the just God, who hateth the proud and showeth mercy on the humble, did rightly chastise me for such pride. For I myself felt a great pleasure when she came back with two women who were to help her to sew, and laid the stuff before me. Next day she set to work at sunrise to sew, and I composed my *carmen* the while. I had not got very far in it when the young lord Rüdiger of Nienkerken came riding up, in order, as he said, to inquire whether his Majesty were indeed going to march through Coserow. And when I told him all I knew of the matter, *item* informed him of our plan, he praised it exceedingly, and instructed my daughter (who looked more kindly on him to-day than I altogether liked) how the Swedes use to pronounce the Latin, as *ratscho pro tio, wet pro ut, schis pro scia*, &c., so that she might be able to answer his Majesty with all due readiness."

Great are the preparations throughout the parish, and on the eventful morning,

"At six o'clock all the people were already at the Giant's Stone, men, women, and children. *Summa*, everybody that was able to walk was there. At eight o'clock my daughter was already dressed in all her bravery, namely, a blue silken gown, with a yellow apron and kerchief, and a yellow hair-net, with a garland of blue and yellow flowers round her head. It was not long before my young lord arrived, newly dressed, as became a nobleman. He wanted to inquire, as he said, by which road I should go up to the Stone with my daughter, seeing that his father, Hans von Nienkerken, *item* Wittich Appelman, and the Lepels of Gnitze, were also going, and that there was much people on all the high roads, as though a fair was being held.

"But I straightway perceived that all he wanted was to see my daughter, inasmuch as he presently occupied himself about her, and began chattering with her in the Latin again.

And proud was the father; but, he observed with surprise, that although "all the folk looked at us, none drew near to see my child's fine clothes." But, ere long, onward came the procession.

"And next after the artillery came the Finnish and Lapland bowmen, who went clothed all in furs, although it was now the height of summer, whereat I greatly wondered. After these there came much people, but I know not what they were. Presently I espied over the hazel-tree which stood in my way so that I could not see every thing as it came forth out of the coppice, the great flag with the lion on it, and, behind that, the head of a very dark man with a golden chain round his neck, whereupon straightway I judged this must be the king. I therefore waved my napkin toward the steeple, whereupon the bells forthwith rang out, and while the dark man rode nearer to us, I pulled off my scull-cap, fell upon my knees, and led the Ambrosian hymn of praise, and all the people plucked their hats from their heads and knelt down on the ground all around singing after me; men, women, and children, save only the nobles, who stood still on the greensward, and did not take off their hats and behave with attention until they saw that his Majesty drew in his horse. (It was a coal-black charger, and stopped with its two fore-feet right upon my field, which I took as a sign of good fortune.)"

Gustavus now "motioned away the sheriff, and beckoned for me and my daughter to approach."

"Such gracious bearing made her bold again, albeit she trembled visibly just before, and she reached him a blue and yellow wreath whereon lay the *carmen*, say-

ing, *Accipe hanc vilem coronam et hæc*, whereupon she began to recite the *carmen*. Meanwhile his Majesty grew more and more gracious, looking now on her and now on the *carmen*, and nodded with especial kindness towards the end. As soon as she held her peace, his Majesty said: *Propius accedas, patria virgo, ut te osculer*; whereupon she drew near to his horse blushing deeply. I thought he would only have kissed her forehead, as potentates commonly use to do, but not at all! he kissed her lips with a loud smack, and the long feathers on his hat drooped over her neck, so that I was quite afraid for her again. But he soon raised up his head, and taking off his gold chain, whereon dangled his own effigy, he hung it round my child's neck."

Alas! the sorrows of the poor pastor and his daughter now begin. Mary's little god-daughter is said to be bewitched; and the people now speak out, and charge her as the cause; so, when the Sunday comes, and they go to the church, they find but six there; and they, upon the entrance of the daughter, fly away. She now attempts to inquire the cause, but finds that no one will approach her. So she returns to her desolate home; even the faithful old maid-servant having quitted them in terror; and "she went on to weep and sob the whole day and whole night, so that I was more miserable than even in the time of the great famine. But the worst was yet to come."

The following day the poor girl is taken up on charge of being a reputed witch, and is carried, amid the abuse of the populace, to the sheriff's castle, where she undergoes her first examination. At this she charges the sheriff and old Lizzie with having caused her to be suspected. This, however, avails nothing, and she undergoes a long cross-examination as to whether she had ever called upon the devil, bewitched the cattle, or injured the crops; to which she replies, she had always done good. She is then asked "how she and her father had suddenly grown so rich, that she could go pranking about in a silk raiment."

"Hereupon she looked towards me, and said, 'Father, shall I tell?' Whereupon I answered, 'Yes, my child, now thou must openly tell all, even though we thereby become beggars.' She accordingly told how, when our need was sorest, she had found the amber, and how much we had gotten for it from the Dutch merchants."

"Q. How came so much amber on the Streckelberg? She had best confess at once that the devil had brought it to her. — R. She knew nothing about that. But there was a great vein of amber there, as she could show to them all that very day; and she had broken out the amber, and covered the hole well over with fir-twigs, so that none should find it."

"Q. When had she gone up the Streckelberg; by day or by night? — R. Hereupon she blushed, and for a moment held her peace; but presently made answer, 'Sometimes by day, and sometimes by night.'

"Q. Why did she hesitate? She had better make a full confession of all, so that her punishment might be less heavy. Had she not there given over old Seden to Satan, who had carried him off through the air, and left only a part of his hair and brains sticking to the top of an oak? — R. She did not know whether that was his hair and brains at all, nor how it came there. She went to the tree one morning because she heard a woodpecker cry so dolefully. Item, old Paasch, who also had heard the cries, came up with his axe in his hand."

She is at length charged with having met the devil "on the 10th

of July at midnight, on the Streckelberg." "And now the whole court rose, and exhorted my poor child by the living God to confess the truth."

"Hereupon she heaved a deep sigh, and grew as red as she had been pale before, so much that even her hand upon the chair was like scarlet, and she did not raise her eyes from the ground.

"R. She would now then confess the simple truth, as she saw right well that wicked people had stolen after and watched her at nights. That she had been to seek for amber on the mountain, and that to drive away fear she had, as she was wont to do at her work, recited the Latin *carmen* which her father had made on the illustrious King Gustavus Adolphus: when young Rüdiger of Nienkerken, who had oft-times been at her father's house and talked of love to her, came out of the coppice, and when she cried out for fear, spoke to her in Latin, and clasped her in his arms. That he wore a great wolf's skin coat, so that folks should not know him if they met him, and tell the lord his father that he had been on the mountain by night."

As the poor girl had described the spot where the amber was to be found, the next day she is taken thither by the consul and sheriff; they there search about and dig for it in vain; and when, half despairing, she prays the judges to go with her to her house, where some of the amber was still remaining, she discovers that all is gone.

"But the gown which she had worn at the arrival of the most illustrious King Gustavus Adolphus, as well as the golden chain with his effigy which he had given her, I had locked up, as though it were a relic, in the chest in the vestry, among the altar and pulpit cloths, and there we found them still; and when I excused myself therefore, saying that I had thought to have saved them up for her there against her bridal day, she gazed with fixed and glazed eyes into the box, and cried out, 'Yes, against the day when I shall be burnt; Oh, Jesu, Jesu, Jesu!' Hereat Dom. Consul shuddered and said, 'See how thou still dost smite thyself with thine own words. For the sake of God and thy salvation, confess, for if thou knowest thyself to be innocent, how, then, canst thou think that thou wilt be burnt?' But she still looked him fixedly in the face, and cried aloud in Latin, '*Innocentia, quid est innocentia! Ubi libido dominatur, innocentia leve præsidium est.*'

"Hereupon Dom. Consul again shuddered, so that his beard wagged, and said, 'What, dost thou indeed know Latin? Where didst thou learn the Latin?' And when I answered this question as well as I was able for sobbing, he shook his head, and said, 'I never in my life heard of a woman that knew Latin.'"

Heavily the father and child return to her dungeon, from whence she is soon taken to undergo another examination; and, as she still refuses to confess, she is led to the torture chamber. These scenes are painted with vivid and appalling minuteness, and (alas that we should say it!) with rigid truth. The Englishman may, however, well exult, that, fierce as was the persecution of witches during the seventeenth century, England was never disgraced by the cruelties of which the records of Germany, and even more of France, furnish such revolting proofs. The sight of the instruments of torture, terrify the poor girl into answers in the affirmative, to every ridiculous or disgusting question which they put, and she is finally sentenced to be burnt on the Streckelberg. Meanwhile old Lizzie dies in a fearful manner, confessing that the charges against the pastor's daughter

have been made up by her and the sheriff. Her confession, however, avails nought, for only the old pastor heard it. In his utter despair of other means of relief, the pastor listens to the proposal of the sheriff to carry her off to a house in the forest ; but the daughter refuses the offer indignantly, and prepares for death.

On the fatal morning, Mary Schweidler, in the very dress in which she had met the King of Sweden, is placed in the cart with her father and the chaplain, the constable standing behind them with his drawn sword, and the wicked sheriff leading the procession. " We met with many wonders by the way," says the poor father, but when the crowd began to curse his daughter, I mentioned to the custos to begin singing again.

" Whereupon the folks were once more quiet for a while — i. e. for so long as the verse lasted ; but afterwards they rioted worse than before. But we were now come among the meadows, and when my child saw the beauteous flowers which grew along the sides of the ditches, she fell into deep thought, and began again to recite aloud the sweet song of St. Augustinus as follows : —

Around them, bright with endless Spring, perpetual roses bloom,
Warm balsams gratefully exude luxurious perfume ;
Red crocusses, and lilies white, shine dazling in the sun ;
Green meadows yield them harvests green, and streams with honey run ;
Unbroken droop the laden boughs, with heavy fruitage bent,
Of incense and of odours strange the air is redolent :
And neither sun, nor moon, nor stars dispense their changeful light,
But the Lamb's eternal glory makes the happy city bright !

By this *Casus* we gained that all the folk ran cursing away from the cart, and followed us at the distance of a good musket-shot, thinking that my child was calling on Satan to help her. Only one lad, of about five-and-twenty, whom, however, I did not know, tarried a few paces behind the cart, until his father came, and seeing he would not go away willingly, pushed him into the ditch, so that he sank up to his loins in the water. Thereat even my poor child smiled, and asked me whether I did not know any more Latin hymns wherewith to keep the stupid and foul-mouthed people still further from us. But, dear reader, how could I then have been able to recite Latin hymns, even had I known any ?

The chaplain now helps her to a verse of that noble hymn, " Dies Iræ," " albeit it is heretical," naïvely says the father ; but while repeating the verse, " Rex tremendæ majestatis," a heavy storm comes on, and the crowd, doubting not that the Latin had raised it, run away as fast as they can. Meanwhile there is thunder, lightning, and high wind, and the sheriff rides back to the cart.

" Moreover, just as we were crossing the bridge over the mill-race, we were seized by the blast, which swept up a hollow from the *Achterwater* with such force that we conceived it must drive our cart down the abyss, which was at least forty feet deep or more ; and seeing that, at the same time, the horses did as though they were upon ice, and could not stand, the driver halted to let the storm pass over, the which the sheriff no sooner perceived, than he galloped up and bade him go on forthwith. Whereupon the man flogged on the horses, but they slipped about after so strange a fashion, that our guards with the pitchforks fell back, and my child cried aloud for fear ; and when we were come to the place where the great water-wheel turned just below us, the driver fell with his horse, which broke one of its legs. Then the constable jumped down from the cart, but straightway fell too, on

the slippery ground; *item*, the driver, after getting on his legs again, fell a second time. Hereupon the sheriff with a curse spurred on his grey charger, which likewise began to slip as our horses had also done.

"Presently a long flash of lightning shot into the water below us, followed by a lap of thunder so sudden and so awful that the whole bridge shook, and the Sheriff's horse (our horses stood quite still) started back a few paces, lost its footing, and, together with its rider, shot headlong down upon the great mill-wheel below, whereupon a fearful cry arose from all those that stood behind us on the bridge. For a while nought could be seen for the white foam, until the sheriff's legs and body were borne up into the air by the wheel, his head being stuck fast between the felles; and thus, fearful to behold, he went round and round upon the wheel. Nought availed the grey charger, which swam about in the mill-pond below. When I saw this, I seized the hand of my innocent lamb, and cried, Behold, Mary, our Lord God yet liveth! 'and he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.'"

All is now confusion, but as the Consul is certain that poor Mary Schweidler had brewed the storm, and caused the death of the sheriff, he commands the cart to move on, and after that Dom Consul had prayed 'God the father dwell in us,' likewise the Custos led another hymn, (I know not what he sung, neither does my child,) we went on our way."

"And when he had gone through the little wood, we suddenly saw the Streckelberg before us, covered with people, and the pile and stake upon the top, upon the which the tall constable jumped up when he saw us coming, and beckoned with his cap with all his might. Thereat my senses left me, and my sweet lamb was not much better; for she bent to and fro like a reed, and stretching her bound hands towards heaven, she once more cried out:

' Rex tremendæ majestatis
Qui salvandos salvas gratis
Salva me, fons pietatis.'

And, behold, scarce had she spoken these words, when the sun came out and formed a rainbow right over the mountain most pleasant to behold; and it is clear that this was a sign from the merciful God, such as he often gives us, but which we blind and unbelieving men do not rightly mark. Neither did my child heed it; for albeit she thought upon that first rainbow which shadowed forth our troubles, yet it seemed to her impossible that she could now be saved; wherefore she grew so faint, that she no longer heeded the blessed sign of mercy, and her head fell forwards, (for she could no longer lean it upon me, seeing that I lay my length at the bottom of the cart,) till her garland almost touched my worthy gossip's knees. Thereupon, he bade the driver stop for a moment, and pulled out a small flask filled with wine, which he always carried in his pocket when witches are to be burnt, in order to comfort them therewith in their terror. (Henceforth, I myself will ever do the like, for this fashion of my dear gossip pleases me well.) He first poured some of this wine down my throat, and afterwards down my child's; and we had scarce come to ourselves again, when a fearful noise and tumult arose among the people behind us; and they not only cried out in deadly fear, "The sheriff is come back! the sheriff is come again!" but as they could neither run away forwards or backwards (being afraid of the ghost behind and of my child before them), they ran on either side, some rushing into the coppice, and others wading into the *Achterwater* up to their necks. *Item*, as soon as Dom Camerarius saw the ghost come out of the coppice with a grey hat and a grey feather, such as the sheriff wore, riding on the grey charger, he crept under a bundle of straw in the cart; and Dom Consul cursed my child again, and bade the coachmen drive on as madly as they could, even should all the horses

die of it, when the impudent constable behind us called to him, "It is not the sheriff, but the young lord of Nienkerken, who will surely seek to save the witch."

And truly it was! The remainder of the story may be easily imagined. "The Amber Witch" is led home to her father's house, and soon after married to the young lord in that very silk gown in which she had been led to execution. "Here end these interesting communications," says the editor, who however tells us, that a tablet to the memory of that young lord and his wife may still be seen in the church of Mellenthin.

From the outline we have given of this story, the reader will perceive that it is indeed one of great interest; but he will probably be surprised to learn that it is believed to be a mere fiction. If this be the case, Dr. Meinhold is entitled to rank very high among writers of fiction, to take, as the Quarterly has said, a station next to Defoe. But even if the Amber Witch be a mere tale, the illustrations it affords of the belief in witchcraft, and the cruelties practised on supposed witches, are all strictly true. None but one well versed in that history could have told the tale of Mary Schweidler, and none but a writer of great power could have told it so truthfully and so well.

THE ECHO.

WE inform our readers, with infinite concern, that the state of Sir E. Bulwer Lytton's health has rendered it impossible for him to fulfil his intention (announced in our last month's advertisements) of writing in our present Number.

To the transmitter of a poem from Monti—"J. W." of Hull—"A correspondent of Jeffrey's Square, St. Mary Axe"—"Germanie"—We are rather solicitous to have originals than translations.

"A Tale of Days gone by"—"W. P. B."—"Souvenir of Aix les Bains"—"C. H. W."—"P. P. of Oxford"—"X. Y. Z."—"Remarks on the word 'But'"—"Bachelor's Hall"—"A Railway Episode"—"The Garret Captive"—"Z. N."—"Margery"—will be found at our publisher's.

Our best thanks for good intentions are due to "Erato"—"W. P. B."—"W. J."—"W. B. P."—"F. L. * * * * y"—"Mrs. A."—"Walter"—"E. R."—"J. D."—"Margaret E."—"E. S."—and the "Authors of Lines on Naworth Castle"—"The Freshman."

"A Chapter on Bustles" is under consideration—for one of our Back-numbers.

HOOD'S MAGAZINE

AND

Comic Miscellany.

OUR FAMILY :

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR GODFATHER.

A MONTH and two days of our little lives had passed away, and another evening was in the wane, without any appearance of our worthy Uncle and Godfather elect, the rich and respectable Mr. Jinkins Rumbold.

He had written, briefly indeed, to accept the sponsorship, and to beg that the spare bed might be regularly slept in, seeing that he was subject to the rheumatism : but, although the morrow was appointed for the Christening, still he came not. No — although his mattress, thanks to the indefatigable Kezia, was well shaken, his blankets thoroughly aired, his sheets sweetly lavendered — a fire laid ready for lighting in the grate — a bowpot, daily renewed, on the mantel-shelf — and the Book of Common Prayer, with the leaf turned down at the Public Baptism of Infants, deposited on the walnut-wood table.

My mother was in despair ; for she was a devotee of a very ancient and numerous sect, renowned for self-torture and voluntary martyrdom. Not that she ever scourged or flagellated her own body with cords or rods, or gashed her flesh with knives, or scoured it with uncut talons, or wore sackcloth next her skin, or emaciated her frame by

long fasts or frequent vigils; but for such painful exercises as lying on metaphorical thorns, sitting on figurative pins and needles, or hanging on colloquial tenter hooks, she was a first-class saint of the self-tormenting order of the Fidgets.

"It don't signify!" she said in a crying tone, and flouncing down in the great white dimity-covered chair in the bedroom, as if her legs had suddenly struck work. "I'm quite worn out! If my brother means to stand for his nephews, he ought to be here by this time. Here we are, as I may say, on the very brink of the font, and no godfather! — at least, not certain. It is running it cruelly fine; it is, indeed!"

As my mother during these observations had first looked down at the floor, as if addressing the spirits under the earth, and then up at the ceiling, as though appealing to all the angels in heaven, Mrs. Prideaux, in her intermediate sphere, did not feel called upon to reply, but continued quietly to rock the cradle.

"A stranger," continued my mother, "might be excused for indifference; but when a brother and an uncle exhibits such apathy, what is one to think?"

Still the nurse remained silent; for the speaker, during her apostrophe, had fixed her eyes on the neglected twins. But my mother was yearning for sympathy, and, therefore, aimed her next appeal point blank at the mark.

"I confess it does fret and worry me; but it is too bad, Mrs. P.; is it not?"

"Not having the pleasure to know the gentleman," replied Mrs. P., "I must beg to decline hazarding an opinion. The delay may have proceeded from procrastination, or it may have arisen from some accident."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed my mother, clasping her hands as if wrung by some positive calamity. "Yes, you are right! There must have been an accident! You only echo my own misgivings. There have been heavy rains lately, and the waters are out of course. Oh! my poor, dear, drowned brother! To think that, perhaps, whilst I am blaming and reproaching you —"

She stopped, for at that very instant the door opened; and, ushered in by my father, and closely followed by Kezia, the dear undrowned brother walked into the chamber, perfectly safe and dry, and not a little astonished at the hysterical scream and vehement caress with which he was welcomed.

At last my mother untwined her arms from his neck, and sank again into the easy chair.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed, "you are safe! But oh! how changed!" an observation she prudently whispered to herself; but which, nevertheless, was plainly telegraphed by the workings of her features. And truly the alteration she beheld would have justified a louder exclamation. From top to toe, the former Jinkins Rumbold had undergone a complete metamorphosis. Instead of his old-fashioned wig — formal, as if cut in yew, by some Dutch topiarian — he wore his own hair, or rather a fringe of it, to his bald head; —

the quaint pigtail, which used to dangle at his nape, was also re-renched; but his chin, by way of compensation, displayed a beard like a French sapper's. And where was his precise white cravat, with its huge bow? Discarded for a black silk kerchief, carelessly tied round his neck in the sailor style, with a lax double-knot. His silver knee and foot buckles were likewise gone; for his square-toed shoes were replaced by a kind of easy buskins, and his kerseymere shorts had become longs, as wide and loose as the trousers of a marine. His waistcoat was unique; and his coat—cut after some original pattern of his own—was remarkable for the number and amplitude of its pockets: fit, there was none. He seemed to have won a suit of clothes in a raffle, and to have adopted them for his own wear from the sole merit of being so easy and roomy that he could roll about in them—like a great oracle of those days, Doctor Johnson.

What an Uncle!—what a Godfather!

Well might Kesia gape and gasp like a hooked gudgeon at such a phenomenon! Nay, the genteel nurse herself opened her eyes to a most vulgar width, and stared at the strange gentleman with a pertinacity quite inconsistent with her usual good manners.

My father alone was unmoved. Accustomed to the extraordinary whims and crotchets of sick and insane humanity, he was not surprised by the oddities of his kinsman, which he ascribed to their true source. The truth is, whilst the worthy drysalter remained in trade the monotonous routine of business induced and required a corresponding precision and formality of conduct and character. He had neither leisure nor leave to be eccentric. To caper and curvet on the commercial railroad is as dangerous as inconvenient and inconsistent. But once released from business, and its habits, like the retired tradesman who sets up his fancy carriage, or builds his "Folly," he started his hobby. Its nature chance helped to determine, by throwing into his way a certain treatise, by some cosmogony man of the Monboddos school, if not actually an unacknowledged work from the pen of the speculative philosopher, who maintained that Man, at the creation, had a tail like the Monkey. However, the original uncle Rumbold had so translated himself as to be hardly recognisable by his next of kin.

"Ah! I see how it is," he said. "You miss my wig and tail, and are boggling at my beard. A manly ornament, isn't it—as intended by the Creator? For eighteen months, sister—for a year and a half, brother-in-law—no razor has touched my chin, and, please God, never shall again—never!—at least while I preserve my reason. As for shaving, it's a piece of effeminacy, the invention of modern foppery; to say nothing of the degradation of having your nose, that very sensitive feature, and one of the seats of honour, pulled here and there, right and left, up and down, at the will of a contemptible penny barber."

"Very degrading, indeed," said my father, stroking his own chin with his hand, as if coaxing a beard to grow from it.

"If there's a ridiculous spectacle in the world," continued Uncle Rumbold, "it's a full-grown man, a son of Adam the Great, with his

human face divine lathered like a dead wall at its whitewashing—now crying with the suds in his eye, and then spitting with the soap in his mouth—and undergoing all this painful, and absurd, and disgusting penance for what? Why, to get rid of the very token that gives the world assurance of a man.”

“Ridiculous enough!” said my father.

“My wig, on the contrary, was an artificial appendage, and accordingly I have abandoned it. If, as a sign of mature age, nature ordains me to be as bald as a coot, so be it—I will go to my grave with an unsophisticated bare sconce. The same with my queue. If she had intended me to wear a pig’s tail bound in black ribbon, at my nape, she would have furnished me with one, or at least the germ of one, at my birth—but she did not, and therefore I have docked off the substitute.”

“So I perceive,” said my father.

“Yes, sir, as a foreign anomaly. But a beard,” resumed Uncle Rumbold, “is quite another thing—a hair-loom, as I may say, from our first ancestor. Its roots were implanted in Paradise—and its shoots grew and flourished on the chins of the patriarchs. And what can we conceive more awful and majestic than the beards, white as the driven snow, and reaching down to the girdle of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, in their old age? But would they have been looked up to and implicitly obeyed by the people as God’s own vicegerents if they had shaved? Not they!—And what, I should like to know, intimidated the barbarian Gauls when they invaded the Roman Capitol?”

“A flock of cackling geese,” replied my mother, who had some random recollections of ancient history.

“A flock of cackling fiddle-sticks!” cried Uncle Rumbold. “It was the beards, the venerable beards, of the Roman Senators. And I cannot help thinking that if our Members of Parliament adopted that classic fashion, and no men appeal oftener to the classics, they would not only deliberate with far more gravity and decorum, but frame laws much more wise, and profound, and just, than they do at present. In fact, all the great lawgivers wore beards. Look at Moses!—look at Solon!—look at Lycurgus!—look at our Alfred.”

“If you please, sir,” said Kezia—her patience worn out to the last thread—“won’t you look at our twins?”

“Eh? what?” snapped Uncle Rumbold, annoyed in his turn, and waving off the maid of all work with an impatient sweep of his oratorical right arm. “By and by, my good woman, by and by. The twins, I suppose, are pretty much the same as other infants—little fat human squabs.”

“As you please, sir,” replied Kezia, with a courtesy, but heightening in colour and expression towards a Red Lioness. “All I know is, they are such a pair of twin neves as any uncle might be proud of—if he was the Grand Turk himself!”

“Well, well,” said Uncle Rumbold, rather pleased than piqued by the allusion to his Oriental appendage. “Where are they? Oh, yonder!—Poor little wretches!”

"Poor little wretches!" exclaimed an echo, very like the voice of *Kezia*; but attributed by Uncle Rumbold to Mrs. Prideaux.

"Yes, poor little wretches!" he repeated, addressing himself to the nurse. "I do pity them — for of course they are to be bound up and bandaged like young mummies of the Nile."

"I presume you mean swaddled, sir," replied Mrs. Prideaux.

"I do, ma'am," said Uncle Rumbold, "that is to say, imprisoning their young tender free-born limbs with linen rollers, and flannel fetters, and other diabolical contrivances for cramping the liberty of nature. But perhaps, ma'am, you wear garters?"

The genteel nurse assented, with a slight bend of acquiescence.

"Because I never do," said Uncle Rumbold. "I detest all ligatures; they check the circulation of the blood, and consequently the flow of ideas. I once got upon my legs, with garters on, to speak in public, and I broke down at the very first sentence — I did, indeed! No, no — no ligatures for me! Look here, ma'am — and he threw open the bosom of his waistcoat — "no braces, you see! — but one garment buttoned on the other, like a schoolboy's."

"I am no judge, sir, of masculine habiliments," replied the genteel nurse; "but of the infantine costume I can speak, which is the same as custom prescribes in the highest families."

"Custom!" exclaimed Uncle Rumbold. "Confound custom! Why not be guided by the light of nature?" And he gave such a rhetorical blow on the head of the cradle, that the twins started broad awake in a fright, and began to pipe in concert like a double flageolet. In another moment they were sending their smothered cries, through stuff and linen, into the bosom and very heart of the maid of all work, who, with an infant on each arm, hurried to the door, which she nevertheless contrived to unfasten, and then pushed wide open, with one leg and foot.

But Uncle Rumbold either overlooked or withstood the hints, and continued his harangue to the nurse.

"In the savage state, ma'am, the human animal has no swaddling. Look at the wild American papoose."

"But ours an't papooses," cried *Kezia*, — "they're babbies."

"Pshaw! — nonsense, woman!" said Uncle Rumbold. "Go to your kitchen. I say, ma'am, the human animal, in a state of nature, is never swaddled! — never! For example, the American Indians. Let us suppose that those two infants there, in the housemaid's arms, were young Crows, or Dog-Ribs —"

"I won't suppose any such falsities!" cried the indignant housemaid.

"Hush! hush, pray hush! whined my mother. "*Kezia*, do hold your tongue, or I shall go distracted!" As in fact she was, poor woman, between her dread of offending our wealthy Godfather, and her horror of his doctrines. But my father enjoyed the discussion, and was sawing away with his forefinger across the bridge of his nose, as if it had been that of a fiddle.

In the mean time my mother's interruption had drawn Uncle Rumbold's discourse upon herself. "I don't know, sister," he said,

"if my spiritual capacity of Godfather invests me with any control over their physical education; but if those two boys were mine, every blessed day of their lives, wet or dry, shade or shine, hot or cold, they should enjoy for an hour or two the native liberty of their limbs, and sprawl and crawl as naked as they were born, on the grass-plot."

"Gracious goodness!—On the damp lawn!"

"Ay, or soaking wet, if it so happened; and what's more, the youngsters should have to climb some tree or other for their suspended victuals."

"Why the poor things would starve!" exclaimed my mother.

"Not they," said Uncle Rumbold. "Trust to the light of nature! Hunger and instinct would soon teach them to scramble up the stem, like young monkeys—ay, as nimble as marmosets!"

My mother shook her head. "But they would sprawl and crawl into the fish-pond."

"So much the better," said uncle Rumbold, "for then they might have a swim."

"But does that come by nature too?" inquired my mother.

"Of course," answered Uncle Rumbold—"as it does to a fish. Look at the savage islanders—I forget what author relates it—but when one of the native canoes or proas was upset, a little Carib, of a week old, who had never been in the water before, kept swimming about in the sea, till the vessel was righted, as spontaneously as a dog."

My mother again shook her head.

"Fact, and in print," said Uncle Rumbold—"he was paddling about like a water-spaniel; and why not? The art of swimming is innate. Take your own twins, there, and chuck them into the river opposite——"

"The Lord forbid!" ejaculated my mother, to which Kezia responded with as fervent an "Amen."

"I say, chuck them into the river," repeated Uncle Rumbold, "and you will see them strike out with their arms and legs as naturally as frogs. In fact, it is my decided opinion that man in his pristine state was intended by the Creator to be amphibious."

"Did you ever make, personally, any experiments in natation?" inquired my father, in his most serious voice.

"Why, I can't say that I ever did, exactly," replied Uncle Rumbold. "But what does that signify, when I'm convinced of my theory? However, as I said before to my sister, if I am to have any share in the physical education of my godsons, those are the principles upon which, guided by the light of nature, I mean to act."

My father made a low bow, so low, that it would have seemed farcical, but for the air of profound gratitude which he contrived to throw into his countenance; but my mother involuntarily uplifted her hands and eyes, while Kezia, forbidden to speak, gave a low groan or rather grunt.

"In the mean time," resumed Uncle Rumbold, "I have not forgotten a sponsorial offering," and diving his hand into one of the

many huge cloth closets or pockets in his coat, he extricated with some difficulty a brown paper parcel, which he presented rather ostentatiously to my mother.

"No trumpery spoons, sister, or jingling corals," he said, as her fingers nervously fumbled at the string—"but something that, rightly employed, will increase in interest and be a benefit to the boys through life."

My mother's fingers trembled more than ever at these words, and twitched convulsively at the double knot, whilst a score of vague images, including a pile of Bank notes, to be invested in twin annuities, passed through her agitated mind. Kezia, with held breath, and broad undisguised anxiety in her party-coloured face, intently watched the unfolding of the successive coverings; and even in the well-bred Mrs. Prideaux curiosity triumphed so completely over courtesy, that she jostled and incommoded our Godfather in her eagerness to partake of the revelation. At last the inmost veil of lawn paper was removed.

"A book!" murmured my mother.

Kezia, fetching her breath again with a deep-drawn sigh, deposited the dear twins in the cradle and hastily left the room; while the genteel nurse, giving her head the slightest toss in the world, resumed her seat and her needle-work.

"A book!" repeated my mother.

"Ay, the Book of Books, as I call it," said Uncle Rumbold—"the Bible, of course, excepted."

"And a presentation copy," remarked my father, adroitly catching the volume as it slid off my mother's knees, "with the writer's autograph on the fly-leaf!"

"Yes—and a tall copy and unique, and privately printed," said Uncle Rumbold. "A work as original as scarce—as logical as learned—as correct as copious—as sensible as sublime—as captivating as convincing—as playful as powerful—as elegant as elevating—the life-long study of a profound philosopher—in short, a work worthy of its title—'The Light of Nature!'"

"It is all very fine, no doubt," said my mother.

"A perfect treasury—a mine of riches!" exclaimed Uncle Rumbold. "The Holy Testament excepted, the world has never received such a legacy. And this, as I believe, the only copy extant! A gift, let me tell you, sister, that nothing but our near relationship, and my anxiety for the future welfare of two—I say *two* nephews—could have extorted from me."

"A mine—a treasury—and a legacy," repeated my mother, with a tear, that might or might not be a pledge of sincerity, gushing from either eye. "You are very kind, I'm sure—very kind and considerate, indeed.—Who's there?"

It was Catechism Jack, come to announce that supper was on the table, in the parlour. So the conference in the bed-chamber broke up. Uncle Rumbold offered his arm to my mother to lead her down stairs; and my father, whistling a march, in a whisper, brought up the rear. Nothing worthy of record passed during the meal, except

that the guest received and relished the mixture which had been promised to him by letter at the suggestion of Mr. Postle, namely, "a draught of something comforting to be taken the last thing at night—say, diluted alcohol sweetened with sugar." The dose was even repeated—and then the parties separated, and retired to their respective chambers.

"Well, my dear," asked my father as he stepped into bed, "how do you like the 'Light of Nature?'"

"I wish," said my mother—but stopping short in the middle of her wish to give a vehement puff at the candle—"I wish I could blow it out!"

CHAPTER XIII.

OUR OTHER GODFATHER, AND THE GODMOTHER.

"GEORGE!"

"Well?"

"How is the morning?" asked my mother, entering full-dressed, and accosting my father, as he looked over the Venetian half-blind of the parlour window.

"Why, I think," replied my father, "considering those low dirty-looking clouds, with tattered dripping skirts, lounging about the horizon, like ragged reprobates who have slept all night in the open air and the gutter, that we shall have a general sprinkling to-day, as well as the particular one in the church."

"I am always unlucky in my weather," grumbled my mother, "especially when it is wanted to be fine. We shall be nicely soaked and draggled, of course; for the glass-coach must draw up at the turnstile-gate; and we shall have to paddle up the wet sloppy church-yard, and the path has been new gravelled, and the dripping yew-trees will green-spot all our things."

"You must take umbrellas and clogs," said my father.

"To go clattering up the avenue, and clattering with into the porch! And the poor children will catch colds, and have the snuffles," added my mother, taking a desponding look at the dull sky over my father's shoulder. "Yes, it will rain cats and dogs, sure enough!"

"There will be the less mobbing," suggested my father.

"That's no comfort!" retorted my mother. "I don't mind a crowd, or being a spectacle, or I should certainly object to walk in public with my brother; for, unless I'm mistaken, we shall have all the tag-rag and bobtail boys in the parish running after him like a Guy Fox. And Kezia too—as if it was necessary at a christening to dress up like a *sle-Harlequin*, with cherry ribbons on a *Mazarine* blue bonnet, and a scarlet shawl over a bright green gown!"

"And our twins?"

"Oh, Mrs. Prideaux has kept *them* genteel—though it was a struggle too—what with the rosettes and lace quiltings that Kezia wanted to stitch on their caps and robes. And then Jack——"

"What of him?" asked my father, with some alarm.

"I have only had one glimpse of him," replied my mother, "in his new livery; and clean washed and combed, and smartened up respectable enough, if he hadn't ornamented his jacket with a parcel of strips of French grey cloth, as well as a great bow stuck in his hat, with a white-headed nail. But Mr. Postle has stripped off his finery, and sent him out with the basket."

"Very good," said my father; "and my bearded brother-in-law, has he been called? He ought to be dressed and down by this time, for he hasn't to shave."

"Oh, pray don't joke about him," exclaimed my mother; "as it is, I'm sadly afraid he'll be affronted before he goes. Do all I can, I can hardly keep myself from flying out at his daring doctrines about the poor children — and, as to Kizzy, I verily believe she suspects he is an ogre in disguise. She can't bear him even to come near the infants, though he has only kissed them once since he came, and then she wiped their dear little faces directly, as if she thought they would catch his beard."

"And if they had," roared the gruff voice of Uncle Rumbold, as he pushed open the parlour-door which had been ajar; "if they had caught my beard, it's better than catching the chin cough. But come, come, no apologies; I'm not easily offended, or I should have been huffy just now with your housemaid, who told me to the hairy thing itself, that it ought to have been blue."

"Poor Kizzy," said my father, "she is plain and plain-spoken, but as honest and faithful as unrefined."

"Ah! a child of Nature," said Uncle Rumbold, "well, I like her all the better; and, if she has a sister disengaged in the same capacity, I'll hire her on the spot. The true old breed of domestic servants is almost worn out, nearly extinct in England, like the bustard and the cock-of-the-wood — partly their fault and partly our own, by always setting them too high or too low — over our heads or under our heels — either pampered like pet monkeys, or snubbed like born slaves — never treated according to the light of nature. For instance, there's the tender passion. It's notorious that nine-tenths of the poor girls in Bedlam went crazy from suppressed sweethearts, and yet, forsooth, no followers are to be allowed; so that unless Molly falls in love with my lord, and John nourishes a flame for my lady, as he often does, by the way, they might as well have no human hearts in their bosoms. Whereas, servants have passions and feelings as well as ourselves — the same natural capacities for liking and loving — ay, and perhaps stronger at it too, as they are at scouring floors and scrubbing tables!"

How long this harangue might have proceeded is uncertain, probably till church time, but for a new arrival, our second godfather, the proctor from Doctors' Commons. In all outward and visible signs he was the direct antagonist of his co-sponsor. His beard and whiskers were cleanly shaved off; and although he was not bald, his hair was cropped as close as a pugilist's. Then his cravat was starched so stiffly, and tied so tightly, that he seemed in constant peril of strangulation: his coat fitted him like a skin, exhibiting a wasp-like figure suspiciously suggestive of stays; and his tight pantaloons

were as tight as those famous ones, into which the then Prince of Wales could not get, it was said, without supernatural assistance. In his manners, besides, he was as prim and reserved as our uncle was free and easy, — so that while introducing Mr. Titus Lacy to Mr. Jenkins Rumbold, my father could not help adding to himself, “ alias Lord Chesterfield and Lord Rokeby.”

Another tap at the parlour door, and in stalked our godmother, Miss, or, as she was generally called, Mrs. Pritchard, a spinster as virtuous in reputation as Cato's daughter, and as towering above her sex, for she stood nearly six feet high without her cap. In features she rather countenanced the Rumbold practice, for though her upper lip was decidedly hairy she never shaved; but in her figure she inclined to the Titus Lacy persuasion, her waist was so very slender — whilst in her notions of the powers and duties of a sponsor, she differed from both; mysteriously hinting that by some mystical spiritual connection with the twins, she became more their mother than their mother, who was simply their parent in the flesh, and as such only entitled to wash, feed, and clothe their bodies, or to whip them if naughtiness required. My mother, it may be supposed, did not greatly relish or approve of this doctrine: but the truth is, the unexpected refusal of a female friend, at the eleventh hour, had compelled her to accept the proffered sponsorship of Mrs. Pritchard, in spite of that lady's former declaration, that if she did become a religious surety, she would not be a nominal one, but fulfil her vows and act up to the character: the nature of which character she painted during breakfast in such colours, that, as Uncle Rumbold whispered to my father, “ she promised to make a devil of a godmother!”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHRISTENING.

My mother was out in her forebodings. By the time that breakfast was over, the ragged dirty-looking clouds had skulked off, and the tall poplar over the way shot up into a clear blue sky. The narrow strip of river that was visible above the grassy bank glittered like a stream of molten gold; and the miller's pigeons, a sure sign of settled weather, were flying in lofty circles in the sunny air, casting happy glances, no doubt, at the earth beneath and the heaven above, instead of a steak under and a crust over them.

Even the little shabby boys who kept jumping over the post on the near side of the road, evidently reckoned on “Set Fair,” for while many of them were without hat or cap, and some had no coat, great or small, none had brought umbrellas, — few had even water-proof shoes on their feet, much less clogs. A great comfort and relief it was, the said solitary post, to the young expectants, most of whom had to wait a couple of hours more or less, before the glass-coach driven by one man and a nosegay, and drawn by a pair of horses and two peonies, pulled up at the Doctor's door.

The mob in the mean time greatly increased, for a rumour of the

bearded godfather, exaggerated, as the tale travelled, into the Grand Turk and the Great Mogul, had flown throughout the parish, so that when the gentlemen—who preferred to walk to the church—issued from the house, it was through an avenue planted with men, women, and children, six deep, and amidst a cheer which only the united Charity Schools, of both sexes, could have composed.

"Huzza!" they shouted,— "Moses for ever!—Huzza! for the Great Mogul!" with other cries which our eccentric uncle would fain have loitered to enjoy and retort, but for the hauling at one arm of Mr. Titus Lacy, who was disgusted with the familiarity of the lower orders, and the dragging on the other side of my father, anxious to be in good time. But the mob was not to be shaken off or left behind any more than the swarming flies that encircle a horse's head. Even so, a buzzing cluster of satellites, male and female, old, middle-aged, and young, kept running, shuffling, trotting, behind, beside, and before the persecuted trio, whom, with a suffocating cloud of dust, they accompanied along the road, through the churchyard, and up the yew-tree avenue to the ancient porch, where an offcast of the curious but less active inhabitants, the lame, the infirm, and the indolent, awaited their arrival.

Thanks to this diversion, the glass-coach followed with a smaller escort, yet not so few but that there was constantly at each window the bobbing head of some long-legged lad or lass snatching peeps, by running jumps, at my mother and godmother, in full dress, sitting bolt upright on the back seat, and on the front one Mrs. Prideaux and Kezia, both in their best, and each holding a remarkably fine twin in her arms or on her lap. But it was otherwise when the females alighted at the churchyard gate and walked up the avenue, where the minority joined the majority of the mob. Then all the clamour was renewed. "Huzza! Old Close! Longbeard for ever! Huzza for the Great Mogul! Who's lost his Billy Goat?" with other cries more or less jocose, and some hostile ones, indicative, alas! of my poor father's declining popularity.

"Who frightened Sally Warner into fits?" screamed a gawky girl, pointing with her coarse red finger at Kezia.

"And who wanted to 'natomize her?" bawled an old lame woman, shaking her crutch at the Doctor.

"And won't sell opie!" grumbled a surly-looking labourer.

"And prescribed a child to sleep with a sick monkey," cried a woman with a green shade over her eyes.

"And a parish burying for our poor Sukey," muttered a tall man with a black hatband on his brown hat.

"And begrudged us our Godsend!" murmured a woman in rusty mourning.

"That is untrue at any rate," said my father to himself, and with the serenity of a good man conscious of the rectitude of his intentions, he stepped smilingly into the church, where the curate was waiting, and the whole party being assembled the baptismal ceremony immediately began. And for a time the service proceeded with due decorum, till about the middle of it, when the clergyman had to demand, "Dost thou in the name of this child renounce the Devil and all his works?"

"I do," shouted a voice from one of the pews, "and 'all the sinful lusts of the flesh."

Every eye instantly turned in the direction of the sound, and at once recognised a well-known face, with its mouth sucking at a forefinger just clapped into it.

It was Catechism Jack,—who had been betrayed by a familiar phrase in the service into one of his old responses.

The curate paused, and made a signal to the beadle, who proceeded to eject the unlucky respondent from the church,—not without an altercation and a struggle, for Jack pleaded piteously to be allowed to see the christening, and even clung to the pew-door, from which at length he was wrenched, with a crash and a jingle of broken glass, whilst a powerful and disagreeable odour quickly diffused itself throughout the building.

"There goes a whole basketful of physic," said my father *sotto voce* to himself.

"So much the better," said uncle Rumbold, in the same suppressed tone. "Trust to nature."

"O! I shall die! I shall swoon away!" murmured my mother, showing a strong inclination to go into a fit on the spot, but the hysterical passion was scared away by a stern emphatic whisper from Mrs. Pritchard.

"Don't faint HERE!" and then turning to the curate and pointing with her long bony forefinger to the font she added aloud: "I object, sir, to that consecrated element being used for reviving!"

The protest, however, was unnecessary, for my mother recovered without any relief from water, save what stood in her own eyes; and order being restored, the ceremony proceeded to the end without interruption, or any thing extraordinary—except that at the final exhortation, when every one else was standing up according to the printed direction, Kezia was observed on her knees, evidently offering up a private extempore prayer,—a departure from the orthodox rite which incurred a severe rebuke from Mrs. Pritchard the moment the curate had pronounced the last syllable of the service.

"Well," said Kezia, mistaking the drift of a lecture that insisted on a strict observance of the ceremonials, "and if I did kneel down without a cassock——" she meant a hassock.

"But you were putting up a heterodox petition of your own framing," interrupted the angry spinster.

"Well, I own I was," answered Kezia; "for the two dear little lively members just admitted into the church. And where's the harm if it did proceed from my own heart and soul, instead of the Common Prayer Book?—It was religiously composed, and I do hope," she added, unconsciously adopting the language of her bakery, "I do hope and trust it won't rise the worse for being home-made."

Here the controversy dropped; and the usual entries and signatures having been made in the vestry, the family party reissued from the porch, saluted by the same cries as before, along the yew-tree avenue, and through the churchyard gate, where the majority of the mob dispersed in different directions, so that the Great Mogul and the glass-

coach were followed by only the idlest of the boys and girls, and of those one or two dropped off in every dozen yards.

The moment my father reached home he hurried into the surgery, and related to Mr. Postle what had occurred in the church with the medicine and Catechism Jack.

"I knew it! Say I told you so!" exclaimed Mr. Postle. "What else could come of entrusting the basket practice to an idiot! But of course, sir, you will discharge him directly."

"Certainly," replied my father, his good sense immediately recognising the policy of the measure, but his humanity as promptly suggesting a loophole for evasion. "Yes, he shall be discharged on the spot,—that is to say, should the beadle be dismissed, for from what I saw of the scuffle, he had quite as much to do with the downfall of the basket as poor Jack."

By a curious coincidence, whilst Mr. Postle in the surgery was thus advising my father to send away the footboy, Mrs. Pritchard, in the parlour, was recommending to my mother a month's warning for Kezia, and with a similar result.

"Why, she does forget her own sphere dreadfully," said my mother; "and puts herself very forward in the parlour, and in the nursery, and even in the surgery, besides behaving very improperly and independently, as you say, ma'am, in the church.—Yes, I must and will part with her—at least as soon as I can find another like her, to do the work of three servants—and which I never shall."

CHAPTER XV.

THE SUPPER.

THE clock struck nine.

As settled in domestic conclave, the dinner had been only a plain early meal, at which the two godfathers and the godmother were treated as three of the family, the grand festival in honour of the christening being reserved for the evening; and my mother, attended by Mrs. Pritchard, had just slipped from the drawing-room to inspect the preparations.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" she said, looking along the supper-table, gay with flowers and lights, and brilliant with plate, of which there was an imposing display.

"Very genteel, indeed I might say elegant," replied Mrs. Pritchard, fixing her gaze especially on her own epergne. "And those silver branches, too, they are almost as handsome and massy as the Cobleys', and of the same pattern."

"Between you and me," said my mother, "they *are* the Cobleys'; and the tankard, you know, is Mr. Ruffy's, a present from one of his rich clients."

"And those silver-gilt salts are the curate's, I believe," said Mrs. Pritchard, "a parting gift from his late flock?"

"I believe it was," said my mother.

"And the dessert-spoons," inquired the tall spinster who had made

the tour of the table; "all with different crests and initials—pray is that a new fashion?"

"They are the school spoons, from Mrs. Trent's," said my mother, reddening. "But the knife-rests are our own."

"And if I may ask," said Mrs. Pritchard, "how many friends do you expect?"

"Why, all those who have lent plate, of course," replied my mother—namely, "the curate, the Cobleys, the Ruffys, Mrs. Trent, and Mrs. Spinks."

"Who!" exclaimed, Mrs. Pritchard, in a tone like the pitch-note of an Indian war-whoop.

"Why, she is rather unpleasant, to be sure," said my mother; "but that is her salver on the sideboard. Then there's Colonel Cropper of the Yeomanry, who is to come in his uniform, and the Squire has half promised to drop in—and if it hadn't been for that nasty little Brazilian Marmot—I ought to have said Marmoset—we might have hoped for the lady at the great house. Then there's Doctor Shackle, and the Biddles—and the Farrowes—and young Fitch, altogether about fourteen or fifteen, besides ourselves."

"Just a nice number for a party," said Mrs. Pritchard, "if they all come."

"They are late, certainly, very late," replied my mother, her heart sinking like the barometer before a storm, at the mere suggestion of disappointments. "But hark! there is an arrival!" and with the tall spinster, she hurried into the drawing-room to receive her guest. It was the unpleasant Mrs. Spinks. Next came Doctor Shackle; and then, after a long interval, the wit of the neighbourhood, young Mr. Fitch, a personage against whom Uncle Rumbold instantly felt that violent antipathy which he invariably entertained towards a dandy, or, in the language of those days, a buck.

"I'm early, I'm afraid," said the wit, looking round at the circle of unoccupied chairs.

"Or like myself, a little behind the mode," said Doctor Shackle. "I forgot that nine o'clock with fashionable people means ten."

"Then we are to have a fashionable squeeze, I suppose," said young Fitch, "a rout as they call it—a regular cram?"

"Oh, no!" cried my mother, eagerly, "only a few, a very few friends, quite in a quiet way."

"About twenty," said Mrs. Pritchard.

"And there are only six come!" observed the unpleasant Mrs. Spinks, deliberately counting heads.

"Are you sure, my dear," inquired Mrs. Pritchard, "that your invitations were correctly dated?"

"O, quite!" replied my mother, "for I wrote all the notes myself, and to make sure had them delivered——"

"By Catechism Jack," said Doctor Shackle.

"No, indeed!" cried my mother, "but by a special messenger."

"Yes, a charity boy," said Mrs. Spinks. "And I know personally that Mrs. Trent had her note; and so had the curate, and the Biddles."

"It is very odd," muttered my mother; "the Biddles were always

arly, and I made sure of Mrs. Trent. She ought indeed to have come to tea. It is very strange — very strange indeed !”

“Pooh! pooh!” said my father. “By and by they will all come in a lump; and if they don’t we shall only be the snigger.”

“And in the mean time,” said young Fitch, “the great Bashaw here with the black beard will perhaps amuse us with one of his hree tails !”

“I am sorry, young man,” said Uncle Rumbold, in his gruffest voice, “that I am not a naval Bashaw, or I would amuse you with mine.”

At this retort, delivered with the look and growl of an enraged lion, the abashed wit hastily retreated to a chair; and the little buzz of conversation which had sprung up, was hushed as by a clap of thunder. There was a pause — a long dead pause — and to make it more dreary, the family clock — an old-fashioned machine with stout works and a strong pulse — stood in the hall, so near the drawing-room door, that its tick! tack! was distinctly audible, like the distant hammering of endless nails into an eternal coffin. Tick! tack! — tick! tack! Oh! that monotonous beat, — only broken by a sudden “click!” like the cocking of a gigantic pistol, and which made every one start, as if Death had actually given warning instead of Time! And then, tick! tack! again, — till with an alarming preliminary buzz the clock struck ten. The odious Mrs. Spinks was the first to speak.

“Quite a quakers’ meeting !”

But nobody replied to the remark. The wit continued mute — the tall spinster merely looked wonderingly at my mother, who looked inquiringly at my father, who slightly shrugged his shoulders, and looked up at the ceiling. Mr. Titus Lacy was habitually taciturn, and Doctor Shackle only opened his lips in a sardonic smile.

At last, at a private signal from my mother, my father came and placed his ear to her mouth.”

“For heaven’s sake, George, do talk! — and get young Fitch to rattle — why don’t he rattle?”

“The Bashaw killed him,” whispered my father. “But I will do what I can.” And by a desperate rally, he contrived to get up a brief conversation; — but the fates were against him. Doctor Shackle seemed determined to answer in monosyllables; and Uncle Rumbold’s hobby, in spite of a dozen allusions to the light of nature, refused to be trotted out. At last my father’s own spirit began to share in the general depression — the discourse, such as it was, again dropped, and then — tick! tack! tick! tack! — Oh! it was horrible! — the only sound, it seemed, in the wide world. Not a knock — not a ring! No one came — nobody sent an apology. — What on earth could be the matter! The clock struck eleven!

“I believe,” said my mother in a faint voice, “we need not wait any longer.”

“We have waited too long already,” said Uncle Rumbold; “at least I have — and long to satisfy the cravings of nature.”

“Give your arm, then, to Mrs. Pritchard,” said my father — “Mr. Lacy will escort Mrs. Spinks; the Doctor will convey my wife, and I

will take care of Fitch ; and in this order the company, if company it might be called, marched, melancholy as a walking funeral, into the supper-room—joined, in their progress through the hall, by Mr. Postle.

My poor mother ! A demon might have pitied her, as she took her place, and cast a rueful look at my father at the bottom of the table, flanked on each side by six empty chairs. A fiend would have felt for Kezia, as she stood, death-pale, behind the back of Doctor Shackle, not from any partiality to that sneering personage, but that she might exchange looks and signs of wonder and grief with Mr. Postle, who sat opposite.

"A pity, isn't it?" said Mrs. Spinks across the table to Mrs. Pritchard ; "such a beautiful supper!—enough for thirty—and only nine to sit down to it!"

"We must make up in mirth," said my father, "for our lack of numbers," and again he made a gallant but vain attempt to revive the spirits of his guests. Besides the common gloom, he had to contend with the animosity of Mr. Postle against Doctor Shackle, and the antipathy of Uncle Rumbold to Mr. Fitch. An unlucky joke hastened the catastrophe. The wit, emboldened by wine, had the temerity again to attack the Bashaw.

"Allow me," he said, "to recommend a little of this," at the same time thrusting a frothy spoonful of trifle as near as he dared to the redoubtable beard.

"Sir," said Uncle Rumbold, snatching up 'a full glass of ale, "if I consulted the law of retaliation—which is one of the laws of nature—in return for your lather, I should present you with this wash for the face. I say, I should be justified in so doing ; but from respect to the present company I shall only drink to your better manners."

A momentary silence followed this rebuke ; and then came a sound which startled all the company, but one, to their feet. As in pile-driving, there is a point beyond which the weight, called the monkey, cannot be screwed up ; so there is a certain pitch at which human fortitude gives way,—and my mother's had reached that limit. The agitation, the mortification, the mental agony she had so long suppressed, had at last overstrained her nerves, and with an involuntary scream, such as is said to come from persons who have swallowed prussic acid, she went into strong hysterics. My father and Kezia instantly hastened to her assistance, but to little effect ; either the fit was so obstinate, or the patient.

"Nothing serious," said Dr. Shackle, "she will soon recover, and in the meantime her best place is bed."

The hint was taken ; the company immediately broke up ; and whilst my mother was carried up stairs to her chamber, her 'grand christening party—of two gentlemen and two ladies—unceremoniously departed.

"Only four out of twenty!" gasped Kezia to Mrs. Prideaux, whom she had dragged apart into a corner of the bed-room, "only four out of twenty!—What, in mercy's name, can it all mean!"

"The meaning is plain enough," answered the genteel nurse, in her calm sweet voice,— "your master is a ruined man."

SEPTEMBER IN PARIS.

WHAT is to be said of Paris, or what is being done there in the month of September, the month of the twelve when it may, with most truth, be said that the French metropolis is out of town—when Baden and Bagnères, Spa, and Aix-les-Bains, country houses and shooting parties, each draw away with an irresistible power of attraction their portion of Parisians—when even those who have lingered the longest, the papas and mammas who have waited for the vacations before withdrawing from the heat and smoke of the capital, hurry off to the country to swallow syllabubs, ramble in green fields, and lay in a stock of health and good looks for the winter campaign of balls and *soirées*? Paris, however, differs from London, inasmuch as there is no time of the year when it assumes a perfectly empty appearance, when the smallest pretender to *bon ton* is ashamed to be seen in the streets, or to enter the doors of a club, and when would-be fashionables shut themselves up in their back rooms, and barricade their front windows that it may be supposed they have left town. In Paris there are always enough people to enliven, if not to crowd, the public walks, to keep the atmosphere of theatres and concert rooms at the legitimate suffocating point, and give a cheerful aspect to the parts of the town more exclusively devoted to pleasure seekers; and if the Bois de Boulogne is just now less frequented by gay equipages and dashing Amazons than it was two or three months ago, there is at least no lack of well-dressed and happy-looking people strolling in the Champs Elysées or sipping their coffee and ices outside the *cafés* or the Boulevards.

In no part of Paris, by-the-by, has a greater improvement recently taken place than in the Champs Elysées. How very short a time has elapsed since they were unapproachable by pedestrians, save by daylight and in fine weather. After the least rain the walks were too muddy, and after nightfall the darkness too profound, for loungers to risk themselves in their Elysian shades, frequented, as they not unusually were, by minions of the moon in the shape of very unpoetical highway robbers. Now, thanks to a profusion of gas-lamps, and to a broad stripe of asphalté pavement, extending on either side of the carriage-road from the Place de la Concorde to the Arc de Triomphe, the Champs Elysées seem likely to be as much resorted to, in summer at least, by night as by day. Several elegant buildings, occupied as *cafés* and *restaurants*, have replaced the unsightly huts and cottages which formerly disfigured the avenues, and of an evening these establishments are lighted up, and some of them have bands of music playing in their balconies. We have certainly nothing in London so brilliant in its way as the part of Paris immediately around

the gorgeous Place de la Concorde—the Tuilleries and their gardens and fountains, the Champs Elysées and Triumphal Arch, the Chamber of Deputies and Church of the Magdalen, all visible at once to whoever places himself beside the Obelisk Louqsor. On the other hand, nothing at Paris can be compared to Kensington Gardens or Regent Street on a fine day. The French and English capitals have each their peculiar merits. Paris is remarkable for its boulevards, its public buildings, and its general air of lightness and gaiety; while London, in its parks, its spacious streets, and the immense number of elegant equipages and splendid horses that fill them, is entirely unapproachable.

The fêtes of St. Germain and St. Cloud took place at the usual period, the commencement of the month of September. The latter, indeed, which lasts an unconscionable time, is only just terminating. Fêtes in the French provinces, especially in the south, are often very pretty and picturesque things, with a deal of rustic grace and merriment, but those around Paris partake more of the nature of an English fair, only without half the fun. Edmonton was worth a dozen of them. The *bourgeois* class of Parisians can hardly be said to be fond of the country for its own sake; they require some pretext for rambling a few miles from their much-loved capital; there must be a merry-making of some kind, swings and round-a-bouts, or *Montagne Russes*, and a Tivoli to dance at. All these, with the addition of clowns and horse-riders, and exhibitions of fat women, colossal children, and double-headed animals, they find in the park at St. Cloud and the forest of St. Germain during the period of the fêtes. The weather was exceedingly hot for the three days of St. Germain, and as there are no houses in the neighbourhood of the fête, and every thing that is eaten there is cooked before fires lighted in the open air, the smell of fat *gigots* and lean chickens that were getting smoked and grizzled before the wood embers, added to the fumes of wine manufactured for the most part out of logwood, Seine water and potato brandy, and the exhalations from the partially washed crowd that filled the streets of booths, composed an atmosphere that was but moderately refreshing and fragrant.

September is an eventful month for the sportsman of Paris, under which head must be comprised every Parisian who possesses a gun, and a good many who do not. On the first the *chasse* opens, and this year, to the great delight and encouragement of the *chasseurs*, the first fell upon a Sunday. The worthy *épiciers*, who are wont to issue forth annually on the opening day of the season, bent upon the slaughter of hares and partridges, chuckled mightily at the thought that they could do so this year without sacrificing their worldly interests to their ardour for the chase. It so happened, that on the afternoon of the 31st August, a conductor on the Versailles railway brought in word that he had seen no less than four hares at one and the same time in a field some seven or eight miles from Paris. The long-eared creatures were earnestly confabulating, evidently devising means to ward off the dangers that threatened them for the following day. This was great news for the Parisians. The rumour spread like lightning from

Vaugirard to the Bastille, from Nôtre Dame to Montmartre; the furnishing of fowling-pieces was great, and the anxiety of the fowlers to be "up and at them" was greater still. Before six o'clock on the morning of the first, compact and formidable masses of determined-looking Nimrods emerged from the various openings that have been considerably left in the fortifications now surrounding Paris, and proceeded to "scour the plain," in which laudable labour they were more or less assisted or impeded by a number of turnspits, terriers, and other curs of low degree, whose masters had vainly endeavoured to persuade them into acting as pointers. By far the strongest detachment of sportsmen took the direction of the field on the Versailles road where the hares had been seen. It is not exactly known whether they found the animals waiting for them there; but it has been asserted that, some time after dusk of the evening of the same day, a number of respectable-looking gentlemen, with double-barrelled guns and empty game bags, were seen cheapening hares at the shops of various poulterers, which, it was maliciously added, had remained open till an unusually late hour in anticipation of the demand.

In the literary world little is stirring just at present. M. Sue's new work, "The Wandering Jew," from which so much was expected, and for which he receives ten thousand francs a volume, is generally considered a failure, as far as it has yet gone. He wants to go too fast. After such a strain on the inventive faculties as the "Mysteries of Paris" must have been, he would have done more wisely to have allowed himself a period of relaxation. Dumas is another of the rail-road school. He thinks nothing of keeping three or four novels going at once, continued from day to day in the *feuilletons* of a corresponding number of journals, and this without prejudice to the production, at tolerably short intervals, of tragedies, comedies, and dramas. He publishes as many volumes, or at least as many are published in his name, in the course of the year, as any half-dozen other writers. The secret of this extraordinary rapidity is to be found in one magical word—Collaboration. The unfledged writer, who, for want of a name, might have difficulty in finding a publisher, betakes him to Mr. Dumas with his MSS. A few hints for alteration, perhaps, a few touches from the hand of the more experienced scribbler, and then, with the name of Alexander Dumas on its title-page, the book goes forth to the world. Thus it happens, that out of twenty books published in his name one or two are good, and two or three readable, the remainder trash.

The mysterious style of literature has not yet lost all its vogue. There are mysteries of London, mysteries of St. Petersburg, and of Madrid, *les petits mystères de Paris, les vrais mystères de Paris*, and fifty others.* One knowing dog advertised a book called "Les Mystères de la Chemise." This was a taking title, and the Parisians rushed to buy the volume. But when they had bought it, the thing proved to be nothing more nor less than a neatly got up and illus-

* In a bookseller's shop at Calais we lately read on a show board "Les Mystères de Londres. Par Sir Francis Trollope."—EDITOR.

trated history of the various perfections and refinements which one Longueville, shirt-maker to the royal family, had introduced into the fabrication of that indispensable article of attire. Before the trick was discovered, the sale had been large, and instead of having paid for his advertisement, the advertiser had made money by it. Surely this is a refinement in the art of puffing that throws Messrs. Moses, Doudney, and Company entirely into the shade.

On the whole, however, mysteries of all kinds may be considered going out of fashion, as is also the Polka, which, after being a mania at Paris since last spring, is now threatened with a successor in the shape of some new Catalanian caper. The Bohemian Forester is to be replaced by the Spanish Mountaineer. All these dances, which make *furore* for a time, are imported from some village or other where they have been danced "time out of mind" by ploughboys and milkmaids. This Polka is by far the greatest hit that has been made for a long while. Everything is *à la Polka*. The urchin in a Polka costume flies his Polka kite, while his father in a Polka cravat and waistcoat drives off in a cabriolet with "La Polka" painted on the door, and his lady mother in a Polka bonnet and gown repairs to her milliner's to order Polka caps and ribbons. Children three years of age struggle out of their nurses' arms to totter through an infantine Polka, and on the bill of fare of every restaurateur one is sure to find half a score dishes christened after the same fascinating *pas*. Decidedly a new dance and a fancied insult from perfidious England are the two things in the world that most excite the exciteable people of Paris.

Theatricals are beginning to revive a little from their summer flatness. Actors and actresses are returning from their leaves of absence and starring excursions in the provinces. Some of the Italian company are here, waiting the opening of their theatre, which takes place in October. Lablache, who is quite a Parisian in his tastes, was one of the first to leave the smoky atmosphere of London, which the French accuse of impairing the voices of the singers who go there. Within sixty hours of his farewell performance in the Haymarket he might be seen sunning his rotundity in one of his favourite haunts, a music shop on the Boulevard des Italiens. Duprez is warbling away at the Académie Royale, having returned some time since from a non-professional ramble on the Rhine, in which he indulged as compensation for the lucrative labour of his spring vacation. He receives sixty thousand francs a-year for ten months' performance at the French Opera, singing twice or at most three times a week, and besides that he has the *feux* or allowances each time he plays, which come to something pretty handsome. Barroilhet, the magnificent barytone at the opera, who is the son of an upholsterer at Bayonne, gets fifty thousand francs, and Madame Stolz, the prima donna, also sixty thousand. Duprez, off the stage, looks exactly what he is — a merry *insouciant* fellow, born under one of the luckiest of stars. He has an elegant hotel in the Rue Turgot, in the quarter of Notre Dame de Lorette, a favourite district with artistes of all kinds, and there, in a pavilion in his garden, he is in

the habit of studying his part and keeping in exercise his invaluable *ut de poitrine*, a note, the possession of which is in France, not without some reason, considered equivalent to a prize in the lottery, or a hundred thousand pounds legacy. His hotel came into his possession by a stroke of good fortune. Some two years ago, or thereabouts, taking a stroll on the Boulevard, he encountered Aguado, with whom he was intimate.

"My dear Duprez," cried the capitalist, "you are the very man I wished to meet. I want to do a little business with you."

"I am at your service, Monsieur le Marquis," replied Duprez. Aguado's Spanish title was Marquis de las Marismas.

"I have got a house somewhere in the Rue Turgot."

"I have seen it."

"And how do you like it?"

"Very much. It is in excellent taste."

"Well, it is yours."

"Mine! — Such a present!"

"Tut, tut, man — no present at all. Did not I say I wanted to do business with you?"

"You did so, Monsieur le Marquis. What is the business in question?"

"I will sell you the house, and you shall pay me by an annuity for my life."

"Excuse me, but I must decline. I have a great dislike to that sort of transaction."

"And why so?"

"You will call me superstitious I dare say, but I consider it unlucky."

"Nonsense, my dear Duprez! My head is as clear and my health as good as ever it was. I have thirty years of life in me, and I should not wonder if I were to outlive you. It is no present I am making you. I expect you will pay me three times the value of the house."

Aguado was so persuasive that Duprez at last closed the bargain. Two days afterwards the man of millions set out for Spain, and within three weeks he sickened and died in a wretched Asturian village. Duprez got his hotel, as he has got many other good things, — for a song.

It is impossible to avoid being struck by the different degree of encouragement given to the arts in France and in England. In Paris one has the whole year round two large opera houses open and well attended, both subsidised by government, the grand opera receiving seven hundred and fifty thousand francs a-year. Besides these, there are the Italians for the five winter months, and two or three vast concert-rooms, where there are nightly excellent performances of vocal and instrumental music. It is difficult to believe that there is a lack of musical taste in England, when we see the crowds that throng to any third-rate theatre where good music is given, however indifferently that music may be executed, and when we remember the great extent to which music is cultivated in private families.

What we want in England is what they have in France—the energetic co-operation of the government, a conservatory, schools of musical composition, and subsidised opera-houses. Were such encouragement given, is there any reason that able composers and singers should not be found in England, or is it true, as foreigners often scoffingly assert, that the fogs of our island are unfavourable to the development of musical faculties of all kinds? Even if a musician does start up amongst us, equal to the composition of something better than trumpery ballads, he is obliged to leave his country before he can find a stage on which to exercise his talent. Witness Balfe, who has been received here with open arms—has composed, and is composing, for the Opera Comique.

With regard to painting, nearly similar remarks may fairly be made. Why have we not a school of painting at Rome, as the French have, supported by government, and where young and promising artists might be sent at government expense, to give them an opportunity of developing their genius? Doubtless were such projects brought before the House of Commons, the Joseph Humes of that assembly would cry “haro!” and “out upon them!” but however alarming the much-needed institutions might appear when magnified by the spectacles of parliamentary economists, their real cost would be very trifling compared to their advantage, and to the credit they would be to the country. Surely the refinement and improvement of a people's taste is worthy the attention of an enlightened government. So much has the want of a school of painting at Rome been felt, that the question of establishing one by subscription has been more than once agitated. Such a plan, however, should be national to be effective. It is certain that English artists receive scrimp measure of encouragement in their own country. The liberality of a few wealthy men may be stimulating in individual cases; but that stimulus neither does nor can extend to the mass, or act to a sufficient extent beneficially upon art in general.

Paris, September, 1844.

EPIGRAM

ON THE NEW HALF-FARTHING.

“Too small for any marketable shift,
 What purpose can there be for coins like these?”
 Hush, hush, good Sir!—Thus charitable Thrift
 May give a *Mite* to him who wants a cheese!

T. H.

OLD MR. FLEMING'S JOURNEY.

A TALE OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

STRANGE and startling as have been the many changes within the last hundred years, and surprised beyond measure as the Sleeping Beauty might well be, if she unclosed her eyes in the year 1844, none, we are sure, would so excite her wonder, as the train and the railway. Whirled along at the rate of thirty miles an hour, how would the lady who, a hundred years ago, set forth in her landau and our to perform a journey to Bath in two days, or the gentleman who took his place in the stage-coach and six, appropriately named "the Dispatch," well assured that he should reach Chester or York in three, — how would they marvel to find themselves at the end of their journey almost ere they seemed to have commenced it! — to have travelled one, two, three hundred miles, without a single breaking down, and without meeting with a single highwayman! Truly a journey, one hundred years ago, was something to be talked of, to be thought about, to be deliberated upon. It was a stirring incident reaking in upon the quiet monotony of our great grandfathers' everyday lives, — an important event, to be looked forward to with almost a solemn feeling.

An important event, indeed, was a journey in the year 1744. There was then no snatching up of umbrella and carpet bag, and setting off by the steam-boat at half an hour's notice; nor could our great-grandfathers, if

"tired with their voyage in the East,
Just order 'the train,' and be off to the West:"

but there was, first, solemn deliberation as to the mode of conveyance, — horse, post-chaise, or stage-coach: then there was the day to be fixed, for neither did stages run, nor could chaises be procured every day; and lastly there was packing up a thousand and one miscellaneous articles, including at least half the wardrobe, for fifty miles beyond London it was thought impossible to obtain aught save curds, cream, and nosebags. So the gentleman set forth with an array of boxes and portmanteaus, as though bound to America, rather than to an English town, and prepared to meet with a dozen adventures (including, at least, one encounter with highwaymen), ere he again returned to his quiet home.

It was no wonder, therefore, that when old Mr. Fleming, one fine morning in August, received a letter with the Northampton postmark, and bearing an invitation from his cousin to spend a few weeks

with him, he should be thrown by it quite into a brown study, and sit stirring his third cup of Bohea (although already cold enough of all conscience,) with his eyes fixed on the mantel-piece, and looking as abstracted as if about to attempt to square the circle.

"What can the letter be about?" thought Mistress Martha, his housekeeper, as she peeped in at the half-opened door, astonished that the little silver bell on the table had not before now rung her summons to take away the tea-things. "Shall I bring the kettle, Sir?" at length she said. Mistress Martha always spoke low, for she was none of your noisy, hallooing, rubbing and scrubbing servants, but a demure, elderly personage, so her question was not heard. "Did you call, Sir?" was her next attempt, and rather louder. Mr. Fleming stopped stirring his cold tea, and politely replied, "No, Mistress Martha;" so the housekeeper had no alternative but to retire.

Mr. Fleming's brown study was, however, now ended. He rose from the small round breakfast-table, and approached the window where the sun was shining in pleasantly; and he looked at the great box-tree on the leads, and the two pots of sweet-peas, and the picotees just opening into flower, and then he looked up to the triangular piece of blue sky, the only glimpse of heaven the tall houses afforded him; and then he turned to the mantel-piece, and contemplated the china shepherdess with her bouquet and lamb, and the shepherd in slashed Spanish suit, holding gilt ears of corn; and touched with these combined pastoral images, "It must be pleasant in the country such a morning as this," said he, "I'm half inclined to go."

The little silver bell now rung its usual summons, and Mistress Martha re-appeared. "I will trouble you, Mistress Martha, to look over my wardrobe, and see after my best cravat, and ruffles, and the cambric ones, and my blue silk stockings, and the pearl silk ones, and ——" Mistress Martha looked amazed, but the old gentleman went on; "and my scarlet roquelaure, which I think hangs in the back-room cupboard, next to the tye-wig."

"The scarlet roquelaure, Sir!" cried Mistress Martha, in unrestrained astonishment.

"Yes, the nights will be getting cold, Mistress Martha, and you know the country's damp."

"Good heavens! your honour don't mean to go in the country!" cried Mistress Martha, almost letting the little tray with the tea-pot, milk-pot, cup, saucer, and plate, fall from her hands.

"Why, I almost do," replied old Mr. Fleming in a brisk tone, "there's nothing like going out a little, Mistress Martha! 'O the pleasures of the plains!'" (Mr. Fleming was always poetical when pastoral) — "and the golden harvest, and the smiling reapers! Why, I have not seen my cousin for full ten years—for truly I did not quite like to undertake such a journey, but I think I must go."

"O Sir, what to that out-of-the-way place, all down in the North? and the nights are getting long."

"Nay, as to that, I believe I can manage the journey in a day; but we must inquire about it."

"I'm sure I wish, Sir, if you do go, you may come safe back. But are there not wild Highlanders in the North, let alone highwaymen?" "The North" was always a name of fear with the thorough Londoner a hundred years ago, so old Mr. Fleming scarcely smiled when he replied, "Nay, three score miles toward the North is far enough away from the wild Highlanders, Mistress Martha."

Great was the marvelling among old Mr. Fleming's female friends, when he acquainted them with his intention of paying a visit to his cousin at Wellsford Grange—it was almost equal to that of Mistress Martha. "That a man at his years should go so far from home," said old Madam Winfield, whose remotest journies for the last twelve years had been to Newington Green and to Chelsea.

"And only to see his old cousin," said Mrs. Lawson, "why could not *he* come up to London instead? Well, poor Mistress Martha is quite cast down about it—a faithful servant, Madam Winfield, is she, and so careful. There she is again bleaching his ruffles on the leads, and hanging out his plum-coloured suit in the sun to air, 'I shall be glad to see master safe back again,' says she."

"Ay, Mrs. Lawson, and so shall I," replied Madam Winfield, "for I don't know where I shall hear any news while he's away."

"Well, but he will have plenty to tell us when he comes back," simpered Miss Peggy Lawson.

"And about what?" angrily replied her mamma; "what have we to do with fields, and groves, or with lambs, except to eat them. Look at your pastoral stuff, what has it done for foolish Miss Chloe Waters?"

Miss Peggy was silent, and went on sprigging her book-muslin apron as though it was her chief duty of life; but in spite of her mother's opinion she could not help thinking that to sit under a spreading tree, with a lamb or lap-dog in her lap, and a comely youth in blue and silver by her side, would be at any rate more pleasant than stitching muslin in a back parlour on a fine afternoon, and listening to the prosings of two old ladies.

Great was the surprise also of Mr. Fleming's gentlemen friends, for as the reader knows, he was a general favourite; but it was not so much at the length of the journey, as that so quiet and stay-at-home an old gentleman should be induced to take one at all.

"His old cousin is not long for this world, I'll warrant," said Mr. Samuel Waters, who always minded the main chance, "and it is well for relatives to be at hand."

"Perhaps there is some *young* cousin in the case," replied Mr. Saunders, laughing, "and suppose he should bring home a wife?"

Meanwhile slowly, but surely, proceeded the multifarious preparations for the old gentleman's journey. Mistress Martha was up to her ears in business; and starching, and blueing, and drying, and ironing, and packing up, occupied her whole days. "I only hope Master will come safe back," said she to Mrs. Lawson, who had just stepped in to see how the packing up went on; "but 'tis threescore miles and more; and Master Giles, the Bedford carrier, tells our boy there are lots of highwaymen about."

"Ah, those highwaymen! well, I would advise Mr. Fleming not to take his gold repeater," said Mrs. Lawson, "nor, indeed, his diamond ring."

"Surely, ma'am, you would not have my master go down among countryfolks without having everything handsome about him," replied Mistress Martha as she folded up the Brussels cravat and ruffles in lawn-paper, with a lingering look of complacency, and pinned the ends quite gingerly with two minikin pins. "I'll warrant me the country oafs have never seen a gold repeater, let alone real Brussels point."

Well, Mistress Martha's exertions at length came to an end. The boxes, all carefully packed, were ranged along the passage in readiness for the eventful morning; the scarlet roquelaure which had hung on the clothes-horse for three days, was laid on the sideboard in the best room, where stood the bottle of cordial drops which old Mrs. Winfield had sent with her best compliments, and the nice little cake that Mrs. Lawson had made with her own hands, both for worthy Mr. Fleming's solace on his journey, and the small loaf of double refined sugar, and the pound of green tea in its leaden canister, presents intended for the country cousin, and which, too valuable to be packed in the boxes, were to be packed by Mr. Fleming's own hands in a separate parcel. At length the eventful morning dawned, and as the clock of St. Peter's chimed four, Mr. Fleming in his tye-wig, plain beaver hat, olive-brown suit, with roquelaure on his arm, appeared at the door, supported by young Mr. Heywood of the South Sea House, who insisted on carrying the important parcel, and followed by a stout porter almost bowed down beneath the weight of half a dozen boxes; while "the boy" brought up the rear, bearing the wig-box and the gold-headed cane, and thus he set forth from his house in Tokenhouse Yard to encounter the perils and dangers of a country journey. "Farewell, Mistress Martha," said the old gentleman gaily, "take care of yourself."

"A pleasant journey, your honour," faltered the housekeeper, "but pray, Sir, take care of cold and damp; — the country's a sad marshy place, and not wholesome for us London folk."

"I will take care, good Mistress Martha; but methinks this journey will quite set me up."

Mistress Martha shook her head mournfully, and watched the *cortège* until they turned the corner, and then double-locking the door, returned to the kitchen, while onward the train proceeded to the Axe Inn, Aldermanbury, from whence set forth, three times a week, "the Wonder, a new stagecoach and six to Leicester and Derby, by way of Newport Pagnel and Northampton, being a stout machine for six insides, newly built, with a careful driver and strong horses," as the handbills and advertisements in the "Daily Advertiser" duly gave notice. And true was the description; for there stood the huge lumbering "machine," as it was appropriately called, looking something like the Lord Mayor's state coach in an undress, with wheels almost fit for a waggon, and a boot that might have held the passengers as well as their luggage. And there were the six stout horses,

Just of the kind denominated in the old household books, "strong trotting horses;" and there was the coachman, always a most important personage: but the driver of the Wonder, one hundred years ago,—who can describe *his* importance? Had he not charge of six precious souls, and (what to him was probably as important) six valuable horses? And had he not to guide "the machine" and these, up hill and down hill, across that highwayman-frequented waste, Finchley Common, and across that veritable land debateable of honest men and rogues, the chalk hills beyond Dunstable; and then through Woburn sands, where many a well-built "machine" had been overturned? No wonder he looked at the traces with a due solemnity, and tied his double red handkerchief in a double knot over his small riding-hat and brown bob, and laid his blunderbuss on the coachbox with an air that seemed to say, "Come on, gentlemen of the road, I'm ready for you."

"A capital coachman, I'll warrant," whispered young Mr. Heywood, who, never having touched even a pistol in his life, was quite struck with such familiar handling of a blunderbuss: "you'll be quite safe."

"No doubt of it," replied Mr. Fleming gaily, and, almost jumping in, he deposited the wig-box and the precious parcel beneath the seat, and laid the gold-headed cane behind him, politely hoping it would be no inconvenience to the gentlewoman, who in dark-colored chintz gown, scarlet cloak, and black velvet hood, occupied the farther corner, and apologizing to a stout heavy-looking gentleman in chocolate, who sat opposite, for having trodden on his toe.

All the packages were at length safely stowed away, the coachman mounted the box, and amid Mr. Fleming's last requests to be finally remembered to Madam Winfield, Madam Waters, Mrs. Lawson, and "the Club," and thanks to young Mr. Heywood for his kindness, "the Wonder" jolted off. On it went over the rugged stones (no MacAdamizing or wood pavement in those days), on to the Cross Keys, St. John Street, where the rest of the passengers were to be taken up. There were but two, a pleasant-looking country gentleman in a rough coat and top-boots, and a young man in a dark suit, who spoke low, but with much authority, and held an enamelled snuff-box and a small volume neatly bound in his hand.

Off again they went, soon leaving "the town" behind them, onward along the High Street, Islington, startling the early milk carriers; along the Holloway Road, then scarcely boasting a single house, and slowly up the steep ascent (archways as yet were unthought of) of Highgate Hill. Meanwhile, but little conversation had passed between the travellers. Now, however, the stout gentleman took out his snuff-box and politely offered Mr. Fleming a pinch, at the same time inquiring how far it was to Barnet; whereupon Mr. Fleming pulled out his road-book, "Ogilby's Survey, reduced to a size portable for the pocket, by John Senex," which he had purchased at the Black Horse, in Cornhill, for this very journey, and acquainted him that it was just six miles and a half. There is nothing like beginning a conversation. Although the question and reply had little of im-

portance, still it broke in upon the dead silence, and forthwith all began to talk, except the young gentleman, who alternately pored upon his book, or looked abstractedly out of the window.

And plenty of subjects had they, now they had found their tongues—the state of the crops, the last news from France, the troops in Flanders, that never-failing subject of conversation—how Marshal Saxe was very nearly annihilated, and how the allied army had passed the Scheldt “in most perfect harmony,” as the London Gazette of the night before had stated, and in which the “Craftsman” had, most strangely, agreed. Questions and doubts as to whether the Allies intended “to besiege Maubeuge, or to attack the French in their lines,” subjects at this particular time hotly debated in every coffee-house in London by politicians who had never smelt gunpowder, followed, and so vehement was the country gentleman in his opinion, and so determinately was it opposed by the stout gentleman, that Finchley Common, with all its perils, was passed, almost ere the passengers were aware. But a stop was soon put to all discourse, when the stage with its weary horses pulled up to the Inn at Barnet; for whatever difference of opinion might subsist as to politics, there was none whatever as to a good breakfast.

And a good breakfast they had—tea and coffee, and hot rolls, although twelve miles from London! and cream, so rich and fresh, that worthy Mr. Fleming, who of all things loved a cup of green tea with cream, declared that it actually smelt of cowslips and violets, forgetful, poor old gentleman, that cowslips and violets had faded away months ago. Well, a comfortable breakfast did they make, except the young gentleman, who took a single cup of green tea, so strong, that the gentlewoman in the chintz gown, who presided at the tea-table, was fain to warn him of injury to his nerves, to which he solemnly replied that his habits of study rendered it necessary. This young man was certainly somebody very superior; so thought Mr. Fleming, who admired a little literature, and who had never yet been in company with a real live author. “What if this gentleman should be one,” said he to himself—“ay, he would not talk on politics, not even to set the stout gentleman right as to where Maubeuge was; and that nicely bound book—I’ll warrant it’s poetry.”

The morning had been misty, but ere breakfast was over out came the sun, shining in all its glory. “What say you, Sir, to a little walk onwards?” said Mr. Fleming to the gentleman with the book, “‘the smiling morn invites us forth,’ as the poet says.”

The gentleman with the book bowed condescendingly, “With pleasure, Sir.” Forth they went, determined to walk on, and let the coach overtake them. A pleasant road is it between Barnet and South Mims, so no wonder was it that Mr. Fleming so long “in populous city pent,” should feel, as the phrase then was, “hugely delighted.”

“Oh! the beauteous prospect,” he exclaimed, pointing with his gold-headed cane to the right, where a richly cultivated landscape was bounded by the dark shadows of what was then Enfield Chase.

“It is,” said the young gentleman with an approving nod.

"What sweet and pure pleasure doth such scenery afford us!" continued old Mr. Fleming, wiping his forehead and taking a pinch of snuff, handing the box to his companion.

"Yes, these are —

'Pleasures of the finest taste,
Pleasures that will always last —
Feather'd songsters on the trees,
Flowers cluster'd round with bees.'

said the young gentleman.

"Beautiful," responded the old gentleman.

"And," continued the young gentleman —

"Noble oxen, prancing steeds,
Nibbling flocks on pastoral meads ; —
Rippling brooks and pearly rills,
Groves on pleasurable hills,
Beauteous prospects, pleasing seats,
Cooling arbours, green retreats."

"O, how *very* beautiful!" exclaimed old Mr. Fleming, again wiping his forehead, while the young man again proceeded—

"Aged oaks and mantling vines,
Flowery shrubs and lofty pines,
Beeches, hollies, limes, and yews,
Dropping with the sweetest dews —
Gentle echoes, vocal groves,
Singing linnets, cooing doves,
Breathing zephyrs."

"Charming, charming," exclaimed the old gentleman, "pray, Sir, who composed this beautiful pastoral?"

"The young gentleman shook his head. "Pardon me, Sir," said he.

"Surely, surely, Sir, I have not the honour of speaking to the author," said Mr. Fleming, with a gaze of reverential wonder.

"You are not far off the truth," said the young gentleman, with a complacent simper.

"O! my good Sir, how honoured I am in your company!—well, they are beautiful lines. You have the right poetic vein, and I trust will supply the loss, ere long, of that true poet, the late ingenious Mr. Pope. But really they should be published."

"I had some thoughts of sending them to the 'Gentleman's' said the young gentleman, carelessly.

"O! do, Sir, by all means; how delighted Mr. Sylvanus Urban will be with them — pray do, Sir."

And so he did, for the reader will find these very lines, with about twenty more, even more splendid than the foregoing, in the "Gentleman's," for September, 1744.

The stage came up, and the pair resumed their seats. The stout gentleman and the country gentleman had exhausted "the war in Flanders," so they were now discussing the Queen of Hungary's manifesto, and right glad were they to see Mr. Fleming, for he had given them much information on their former subject of discussion.

But Mr. Fleming did not seem inclined to take part in their conversation : how could he, feasted as he had been with pastoral scenes, and pastoral poetry? so he politely bowed, and said, like Sir Roger de Coverley, that "much might be said on both sides."

Onwards trotted the horses, onwards jolted the coach, until they arrived at St. Alban's, "a place of great antiquity," as Mr. Fleming told his companions, and where they dismounted to lunch. Well, justice was done to this meal, but sadly disappointed was our old friend that he had not time to see the Abbey : — not for the recollections of twelve hundred years which clustered round it, — not to admire its noble proportions and its delicate carvings — for was it not an old tumbledown Gothic church? but because Duke Humphrey, of Gloucester, lay there in pickle, and such a sight was not to be seen everywhere. But time was short, so onward they went, for they were to dine at Market Street previously to encountering the perils of the Chalk hills; and curious it was to find how the conversation, although it was near high noon, began to turn to the dangers of the road, and how the latest reports of highwaymen actually superseded a conversation which had just been commenced, on the general character of Mr. Pelham's administration. And onward they went at a quick pace, as though the very horses knew it was near dinner time, and by one o'clock, they entered Market Street.

"More than thirty miles from London," said Mr. Fleming, as he entered the Red Lion Inn, and looked round about him like a traveller in a strange land. But although thirty miles from town, happily there was a dinner as good as a London tavern could furnish, and to which all did justice; and so much time was allowed that they were even able to order and to drink a bottle of Port, which, indeed, among four gentlemen could not take much time.

"To the health of Mr. Pelham," said old Mr. Fleming, as he drank off his second glass.

"I join you in that, Sir," said the stout gentleman, — "a good minister, Sir, and a worthy successor of Sir Robert."

"A worthy successor indeed," said the country gentleman, angrily, "hang the Hanover rats, and all who support them."

Mr. Fleming looked aghast; he had often been told that "down in the North" Jacobites were as plentiful as blackberries, — could this merry good-humoured looking man be one? "Why, Sir, what can you object to Mr. Pelham?" said he.

"That he keeps up the malt-tax, and helps the Whigs; and besides gave a place in the Customs, which my brother came up two hundred miles to ask for his son, to a fellow who's the son of a Dutch woman. Old England's ruined, Sir, clean ruined."

"No, Sir, old England's *not* clean ruined, Sir," retorted the stout gentleman; "it's he over the water who'd ruin us if he could. And what if the Pretender should come, Sir, with a thousand or two frog-eating Frenchmen, Sir, and take away our great Charter, and our Habeas Corpus, and our roast beef, and our rights and liberties, Sir?"

"Truly, as we have so many left," interposed the poetical young gentleman, with a look of gentle contempt.

"And haven't we?" retorted the stout gentleman, getting quite red in the face.

"Not so many, when the Treasury is on the look-out to prosecute for pretended libels," replied the young man; "but what can be expected from an illiterate ministry?"

"I'll tell you what, Sir, if Mr. Pelham would just put half a dozen of those Grub Street scribblers in the pillory, I'd give something toward rotten eggs for them," cried the stout gentleman.

O, how vexed was poor Mr. Fleming! He was a man of peace, and it was because he believed every body, except downright Jacobites, admired Mr. Pelham that he had so incautiously given the toast. Long did he labour to reconcile the opposing parties, long after they had again taken their seats in the stage; but, although he had in part succeeded, he was vexed to see what constraint still remained. And now they had passed through Dunstable, and were entering on that dreary, grey, treeless district which, from the times of our Norman kings, had been the resort of "strong thieves." Slowly the stage jolted on; there were four hills to cross, as Mr. Fleming's road-book showed, and they were only surmounting the first. How lumberingly did the stage jolt down the other side; and then, right before them was another hill, white and grey, and with patches of dark grass here and there — "a sad-looking place," as Mr. Fleming said. And yet even this was an advantage; for questions as to whether the huge lumbering "machine" would be able to reach the top took place of other questions, and by tacit consent politics were postponed until a more level road should be reached.

With difficulty did the heavy stage mount the slippery hill, although shoeless children ran along, propping up the wheels with small stones, and although three out of the four gentlemen dismounted — the young gentleman coolly keeping his place; — and they were just about to descend the farther side, when a horseman rode up. Could it be a highwayman? Mr. Fleming almost began to fear; but no, it was a gentleman's servant, who came to ask if his master could be accommodated with a place, his own carriage having broken down, and he being anxious to reach Woburn that night. How fortunate for the gentleman there was just one place! and how pleasant for the passengers there was a new companion, and doubtless a gentleman, for did he not ride in his carriage? And a gentleman indeed he appeared — a right earnest gentleman, said the stout one afterward, for he was a good-looking and pleasant-looking person, about forty, with that quiet well-bred air that proved he had been accustomed to genteel society, and with a pleasant smile, that showed he wished to make himself agreeable. And how entertaining was his conversation. He told them, when they talked of the dangers of the way, how, when travelling in Italy, he had been attacked by banditti; and then he talked of France and Flanders, and described Maubeuge exactly, for he had been there. So the stout gentleman begged him to favour them with his view of public affairs; but he politely declined. "Let us leave politics to the town," said he, "and enjoy ourselves in the country."

"But I hope, Sir, you support Mr. Pelham," persisted the stout gentleman.

The unknown gentleman smiled.—"Nay, Sir, a truce with politics, for I greatly doubt if all here are of one mind;" and he glanced an arch look toward the young man, who sat back in the opposite corner with his head almost buried in his book.

"Well, Sir, whether you belong to Mr. Pelham's party or not, you look like an honest Englishman," said the country gentleman.

The unknown smiled again. "I trust I am, my good Sir, and I am sure I have England's interest at heart."

"Then I'm sure you ought to hold with Mr. Pelham," said the stout gentleman, "ought he not, Sir," addressing our friend Mr. Fleming.

Poor Mr. Fleming, he feared the war of words would again break out, so he quietly said, "That is our opinion, good Sir, for we value Mr. Pelham most highly; but this gentleman may not be of our way of thinking." And he bowed politely.

"Not greatly different, I believe," said the gentleman, smiling; and he took out his snuff-box—what a handsome gold one it was! and his ruffles, they were beautiful point;—perhaps he was some nobleman, or some gentleman about court. Well, the snuff-box passed from one to another, the gentlewoman in the chintz first, (all ladies took snuff in those days,) and the only one who refused it was the young gentleman. Indeed, he seemed very uncomfortable, and at length, when the stage stopt at Hockliffe, he said he would walk on.

"An ingenious gentleman that," said Mr. Fleming, turning to the stranger, "a poet, Sir."

"Is he?" said the gentleman, with a quiet smile, "I think I know somewhat of his prose writings."

"What a clever young man, known already as a prose writer!—Well, I must get his name," thought Mr. Fleming, "and tell Madam Waters, who likes such things, all about it."

On they went right pleasantly; for their new companion seemed to know every thing, and to be willing enough to answer whatever questions were asked him, save political, so it was quite with regret that they parted with him when they stopped at Woburn.

"He's some nobleman, I think," said the coachman, "for he's going to Woburn Abbey."

"Pshaw!" said the poetical young gentleman, who now sullenly took again his place in the coach. Well, he might say what he pleased, but all the rest maintained that the stranger was a true gentleman, and might perhaps be a nobleman into the bargain.

Heavily dragged the "machine" through the Woburn sands—heavily on to Newport where they were to take tea; and heavily lagged the conversation.

"Do you go to Leicester or Derby, Madam," said Mr. Fleming at length, determined to have a little talk, addressing the lady in chintz, for he was now fifty-two miles from London, and he felt low and dull.

"Only to Northampton, Sir."

"Do you know that town, Madam?"

"O yes, it is not far from my birth-place," said the lady, with a sigh; "Wellsford Grange."

"Wellsford Grange! — my good lady, why I am going there to my cousin Fleming. But — but," looking earnestly at her, "is it possible? my cousin had a sister, poor Lucy, who married my brother, and they went to New England twenty years ago."

"Ah, cousin James, poor Lucy is now speaking to you."

How astonished was Mr. Fleming! "That we should have travelled so many miles without knowing each other!" said he, "and that we should at last meet: — my poor brother! how often have I inquired after his widow and family, but could learn nought. And your children, are they in England?"

"Yes, at Wellsford Grange."

"O how glad I shall be to see them!" cried old Mr. Fleming, rubbing his hands. "Well, this is an adventure worth travelling a hundred miles to meet with."

Three weeks passed away, but old Mr. Fleming had only once written to his inquiring friends.

"His cousin is doubtless very ill," said Mr. Waters.

"He is courting some fair shepherdess, perhaps," said Mr. Saunders, "you know the old gentleman always liked a bit of the pastoral."

"Well, I only wish he was back again," said Madam Winfield, "for here I sit evening after evening, and if it was not for my maid and Mrs. Lawson, who's a kind soul, I should not hear a bit of news."

Well, one afternoon in came Mrs. Lawson with a letter in her hand. "Ah, Madam Winfield, here's news enough from old Mr. Fleming. You'd never believe it. Here he writes that he intends to be home this day week, with his 'fair companion.' These are his very words; and as he shall travel post, he begs us to meet him at Barnet. 'I shall come home more in love with the country than ever,' says he, 'and long to introduce you to my fair Pastora.'"

Madam Winfield lifted up her hands and eyes. "Gracious goodness! to think of his marrying a young girl, and he will be sixty-four come Michaelmas!"

"Ah, Madam Winfield! a foolish old man — here he goes on with such stuff. 'Tell Mistress Martha I have never once taken cold, though I've been walking out in all weathers with my fair shepherdess, who is worthy to tend a flock in Arcadia.'"

"Stuff," grumbled Madam Winfield. "Keep an old man's house in Tokenhouse Yard, he means: but poor Mistress Martha, what will *she* say to it?"

Anxiously awaiting the arrival of old Mr. Fleming and his youthful bride, Mrs. Saunders, Mrs. Lawson, and Miss Peggy, were leaning over the balcony of the Swan at Barnet, while the gentlemen stood chatting below, when a chariot and four, with outriders, stopped to bait, and a pleasant-looking middle-aged gentleman leant out of the

window. There was a bustle. "It's Mr. Pelham," whispered the landlord; and off went the gentlemen's hats, and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and the boys set up an hurrah. Just then a chaise and pair drove up; but little attention was paid to it, for every eye was bent on that minister who had succeeded to Walpole's power, but to more than Walpole's popularity. The door opened, and out came Mr. Fleming in his plum-coloured suit, handing a very pretty girl in a light mantua. "Ah, my good Sir," said he, catching Mr. Pelham's eye, "so we have met again."

"Good Mr. Fleming, what are you saying!" cried Mr. Saunders, pressing forward. But Mr. Fleming was laughing gaily, and introducing the lady to the prime minister, who was also laughing most good-humouredly (for a pleasant man was Henry Pelham), and there they were in close conversation, to the marvelling astonishment of the ladies in the balcony.

"Mr. Fleming, surely you do not know that that was Mr. Pelham," said his friends, as the minister with a polite bow drove off.

How did Mr. Fleming stare—how did he ejaculate "who could have thought it! why, he was my fellow-traveller!"

"Ah! and who could have thought of your bringing home a wife, Mr. Fleming?" said Mr. Saunders.

The old gentleman now laughed long and merrily. "I thought I should mystify you all," said he; "but this is my niece, my pretty niece, Lucy Fleming, who I hope will prove a daughter to me," continued he, lovingly taking the fair girl's hand, "and be a comfort to my old age."

"Well, I have indeed some adventures to talk of," said old Mr. Fleming, smiling complacently, when he again met the Club, and received their congratulations on his safe return. "I have found a sister-in-law, brought home an adopted daughter, and I have seen the writer of those letters against the ministry in Fogg's Journal—he who signs 'Publicola,' I mean—(ah! he's a beautiful poet, though more than half a Jacobite, more's the pity,) and then"—for this was the climax—"I rode from Dunstable to Woburn, and talked and took snuff with Mr. Pelham! Well, mine has indeed been an eventful journey!"

H. L.

THREE GAELIC MELODIES.

BY DELTA.

ese sets of verses, founded on Highland local traditions, have been
 nged to accompany unpublished music, peculiar to that portion of Scot-
 ; and will appear, probably in the course of the season, in an elegant
 k devoted to that purpose, now in preparation by a lady of Perthshire.]

THE DROWNING LADY.

I.

“ HARK to the storm on high !
 And the hoarse winds sweeping by !
 From shore to shore resounds the roar
 Of wild waves trampling nigh !
 The sea—’tis the fierce white sea,
 In its wrath encircling me !—
 Oh, sister dear ! in pity hear !
 I would hear, and pity thee !

II.

“ Beneath the midnight gloom,
 Thou leav’st me to my doom,—
 The rising tide foams far and wide,—
 Woe’s me ! thou wilt not come !
 My silken plaid so fine,
 Is soak’d with the heavy brine ;
 Thro’ twisted shoots of the ellom’s roots,
 My long drench’d locks entwine.

III.

“ Oh, gallant brothers three !
 Where sail ye on the sea ?
 Fain would I mark your coming barque,—
 ’Twill come too late for me !

Farewell, my sire's proud line!
 Farewell, dear mother mine!
 Be blessings shed upon each head,—
 But a double share on thine!

IV.

"But my heart—my heart it breaks,
 My babes! for your dear sakes;
 Now thro' the hall for me you call—
 And no one answer makes!"——
 So died the voice away:
 And, at the dawn of day,
 That lady drown'd the searchers found,
 Her garments froth'd with spray.

ART THOU ALLAN?

I.

MORNING calls, and I must wander,
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero!
 Where the streams with sweet meander
 Down the glens of bracken flow:
 See the Day-Star, in the West,
 Lures the skylark from its nest,—
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero!

II.

Art thou Allan? Stranger, tell me?
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero!
 Ah! could'st thou know what befell me,
 When they forced me hence to go!
 From my heart, and from my brain,
 They would tear thee—but in vain!
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero!

III.

Come, oh come!—no more thou comest—
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero!
 Far o'er foreign shores thou roamest,
 Where the Indian twangs his bow;
 Underneath the palm-tree laid,
 Dream'st thou of thy Scottish maid?
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero!

IV.

Up to Heaven arose my wailing !
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero !
 From the tower I saw thee sailing
 Eastward with the billows' flow ;
 Did my moans, as I deplored,
 Melt thy heart that ship aboard ?
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero !

V.

Brothers—brothers—ill betide ye !
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero !
 Friends shall shun ye, foes deride ye !
 Hemlock on your tombs shall grow !
 Ye who weigh'd like empty air
 Allan's truth and my despair !
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero.

VI.

Fare ye well ! but never—never—
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero !—
 From this fond heart can ye sever
 Him whom ye have injured so :
 No ! its latest throb shall prove
 True to Allan and to love !
 Orie, Orie, Orie, iero !

WOE ! WOE TO THEE, CULLODEN PLAIN !

I.

In splendour glow'd the morning sun,
 As curb'd our chief his gallant grey ;
 And from our ramparts peal'd the gun,
 While marched afield his proud array :—
 Yes ! rose to Heaven the wild huzza,
 When woke the pibroch's strain—
 But ah ! they bade adieu, that day,
 That came not back again !
 Woe ! woe to thee, Culloden Plain !
 Where noble blood was shed ;
 Our Coronach is o'er the slain,
Our wail is for the dead !

II.

Moth-eaten, rot our banners proud ;
Our good claymores are red with rust ;
And if we pray, 'tis not aloud—
For him who from his throne is thrust.
Dawn quickly, Day ! when we may trust
To face his foes again,
Strike down the oppressors to the dust,
And free our shields from stain !
Woe ! woe to thee, Culloden Plain !
Where gallant blood was shed ;
Our Coronach is o'er the slain,
Our wail is for the dead !

III.

Now silent are the trophied halls,
Where mirth and music sped the hour ;
The green o'ermantling ivy crawls
From niche to niche, from tower to tower :
No more smiles Beauty from her bower—
'Tis rent by wind and rain ;
There drops the ripe fruit, and the flower
Perfumes the air in vain !
Woe ! woe to thee, Culloden Plain !
Where loyal blood was shed ;
Our Coronach is o'er the slain,
Our wail is for the dead !

THE PRIEST'S DAGGER:

AN INCIDENT IN SPAIN.

In a village lying on the road between Vittoria and Logiono, two travellers seated at the long wooden table of a small *Posada* awaited their noon-day meal. The strangers in question had availed themselves of their privileges as Englishmen, originals *par système* as Dumas calls them, each to select the costume that appeared to him the most convenient, or in the best taste. One of them wore a dark blue smock-frock, such as is used among the French peasantry. It was confined at the waist by a leather belt worked with various devices, and fastened with a huge buckle adorned with brass studs (a purchase probably from some wandering Swiss). A broad-brimmed straw hat lay beside him. His companion was attired in a loose black velvet jacket, from which in lieu of buttons hung numerous pieces of the small silver coin of the country. A woollen sash was wound several times round his waist; its bright scarlet hue forming a striking contrast to the dark colour of his ample trowsers, which were of the same material as his jacket. On his head was the *boina* or flat cap of the Basque provinces, of a deep crimson, the entire top covered by a large gold tassel.

It is said, that whatever his dress, an Englishman may be known at a glance. A few loungers sat smoking their *cigaritos* in the little apartment, and the word "*Inglés*" was whispered from one to the other till it reached the ear of an old woman who sat spinning at the open window. Her sullen addition of *heréticos* did not diminish the ill-will with which two persons were regarded who had not only arrived when the hour of dinner was past, but were so unreasonable as to expect that a meal could now be prepared for them. In the north of Spain a constant intercourse with foreigners has so far influenced the national manners, that a stranger seeking refreshment is no longer in danger of being recommended to dine on whatever he may have brought with him; but if not expressed in words, the sentiment in some degree still exists, and in the instance of our travellers, not only was the larder declared empty, but there seemed to be insuperable difficulties in the way of procuring any thing they could eat — until supper time, when the landlord was ready to promise whatever they liked. Luckily fortune befriended them.

At the farther end of the table sat an old man, whose flowing robes and broad-brimmed hat proclaimed the *Senór padre*, or village curate. His solemn dress could not disguise the expression of good humour

and benevolence that twinkled from his small grey eyes. From the moment of the strangers' entrance he had continued to watch them, and when the nature of their dilemma became apparent, a few words, spoken by him in a low voice to the innkeeper, at once removed every difficulty. Mine host suddenly remembered that not only were eggs to be had, but even a chicken, if the travellers would wait while it was caught and prepared; bread was always at hand; and, even without the garlic soup and puchero, indispensable accompaniments to a Spanish dinner, he thought the *Caballeros* might manage very well. These arrangements concluded, the friendly priest seized the opportunity of addressing them, and, to their great astonishment, it was in good English that he inquired what had brought them to that part of the world. Marston, the younger of the two, informed him that he was an artist, and having completed an excursion in the Pyrenees, where he had met his companion, an old schoolfellow, the latter had been induced to accompany him on a sketching tour through Spain. In return, they learned from the priest that he had been sent to Spain, while a youth, to study for the Church; but in the wars and revolutions that so long distracted that unfortunate country, he had found himself, like many of his order, more engaged in fighting than praying. His eyes lighted up as he spoke of skirmishes at which he had been present; and, though he said little about himself, the martial ardour with which he related the exploits of his comrades led his hearers to believe that he had borne no unimportant part in them. In the temporary calm that had succeeded the expulsion of the French, he had been thrown back on his old profession, and, after many changes, had finally settled down in the village where they had found him. The conversation then turned on their intended journey.

"It will be impossible for you to reach Vittoria to-night," said the priest, in reply to their questions concerning the road; "neither do I think the path you propose taking over the mountains quite safe."

"I have nothing that I care for losing, except my buttons," said Marston, laughing; and if any thing in the shape of an adventure came across us, I should not dislike it."

"Ah! I see, a modern *Salvator Rosa*," replied the father; "but I would not advise you to tempt fortune too far. Our Spanish brigands are very matter-of-fact fellows. They have lost all the romance that was formerly supposed to accompany the character, if indeed it ever did belong to it. When they have plundered a traveller, far from treating him to a repast on the grass and a tune on the guitar afterwards, many late examples have shown that they can be very brutal in their conduct; but the civil wars in this country have quite changed the national character."

Seyton, the more sedate of the travellers, did not hear these remarks unmoved. He was a young man of independent fortune, and had been living for some time in Paris. The constant pursuit of pleasure had injured his health and weakened his nerves, and though not wanting in courage, he had lost the high spirit and energy that

made his friend enjoy the spirit of an adventure, no matter how perilous. But it was in vain that he sided with the priest, who recommended them to keep to the high road.

Marston laughed at them both, and alleging that the mountain path would better suit his purpose of taking sketches, Seyton was forced to yield.

"Of course you are armed?" said the priest, as he took a friendly leave of them.

"No, indeed!" replied Marston. "It is a precaution that we never thought of taking."

"No arms!" returned the old man. "It is plain that you are strangers in this country, where the honest peasant would not stir from his own door without his knife." He looked cautiously round, then drawing a dagger from under his dress he continued: "Even I am not without the means of self-defence; but take it. It may stand your friend in need, and if, as I hope, you find no occasion for its services, keep it as a remembrance of one to whom your society has afforded much pleasure."

The gift was accepted with many thanks, and the young men set off. Seyton was silent for some time.

"It is strange," said he at length, "that a priest should carry a dagger about him; I doubt his being what he appeared."

"That is so like you, Seyton," replied the other; "if you can only find a reason for suspicion, you do not care for probabilities. If the *Padre* had any ill designs, he had only to use the weapon when our backs were turned; but let us look at his present."

It was a dagger of antique form and workmanship. The ivory handle was handsomely carved, and as the young artist half drew it from the sheath he read the following inscription engraved on the blade:

*"Quiēn me saques sin razon me embainera sin honor."**

"A pithy maxim, and worthy of the stout old Spanish steel, for you may see this is no modern weapon. If I were superstitious, I might thank my stars that I had not completely drawn it."

The friends had proceeded some hours on their way, when the darkened sky gave notice of an approaching storm, and to add to their embarrassment, the traces of the path they had hitherto followed became every moment more uncertain. As Seyton began to reproach his friend for the obstinacy with which he had rejected the priest's advice, they heard a shrill whistle, and looking in the direction from whence it proceeded, saw a man standing on a crag above their heads; a huge wolf-dog was by his side. The expression of his countenance was singularly sullen and unprepossessing, and the blue *boina* drawn over his shaggy eye-brows, as well as a long rifle slung at his back, gave something so sinister to his whole appearance that even Marston was in doubt whether he had not met with one of those brigands he had so much wished to see.

* Who draws me without reason, shall sheathe me without honour.

"Hollo! friend," he exclaimed, as large drops of rain, accompanied by a distant roll of thunder, gave renewed warning of the coming storm; "can you tell us of any shelter hereabouts?"

"I know of none but my own hut," said the man, holding his dog, which seemed inclined to spring on the travellers.

"How far are we from the next town?" inquired Seyton, who did not feel tempted to accept the accommodation offered by the suspicious-looking stranger.

"*Quatro leguas.*"

"Four leagues!" exclaimed Marston. "What the deuce are we to do now? we shall never get there before night."

An offer of payment if he would be their guide was refused on the plea that he could not leave his flock of goats, and nothing remained but for them to accept the shelter he had offered.

The path was pointed out, and they were desired to continue in it till they came to a cross, when a turn to the right would bring them to the hut.

"Pray are there any robbers in these parts?" asked Seyton, whose suspicions of their guide increased every moment.

"There is no want of them here any more than elsewhere," returned the goatherd, and without waiting for further reply he turned, and was soon lost to their sight, although his distant whistle showed that he had not entirely deserted the neighbourhood.

"What an ill-looking rascal!" exclaimed Seyton. "I never saw a man whose appearance was more against him; and what was that he said about a cross? They always set them up where a murder has been committed. Some foul deed has been done here, and I wish that fellow may not have had a principal hand in it."

"What an infidel you are," returned Marston; "the countenance of that poor fellow, which you abuse, is the type of one of Murillo's famous beggar-boys. It is the true Spanish expression, as you find it in the south; and see here," he continued, pointing to a wooden figure of our Saviour, "instead of your sable cross and the sombre ideas with which you invested it, it was this blessed crucifix itself of which he spoke. Are you not ashamed to have belied a man whose dwelling, placed close to this holy image, shows that his religious feelings are peculiarly strong?"

Thus bantering his friend, the young artist led the way into the hut. Their asylum, though the last they would have chosen under less desperate circumstances, was securely built, and fastened with a strong door. A small aperture on one side served at once the purposes of a window in summer and an outlet for the smoke in a more severe season, as was shown by a quantity of dried sticks that lay under it. The whole furniture consisted of a wooden bench, which Marston proposed should serve them in turn for a bed.

"I resign my rights to you," said Seyton, "and will keep watch till morning. I only wish we were safe out of this infernal hole."

"Still suspicious of our friend the goatherd, I suppose," returned the other, as he arranged his knapsack under his head, and, stretching himself on the bench, was asleep in a few minutes.

The hut and all without were soon enveloped in darkness ; but in a short time lightning, that seemed to flash from pole to pole, was followed by peals of thunder that shook the very firmament. More than once Seyton started to his feet, in the belief that the stones of which the hut was built were falling about their heads ; but each succeeding flash showed him his companion sleeping, tranquilly, on his hard pillow.

After awhile the fury of the storm began to abate, and the sullen rolling of the distant thunder was followed by a dead silence. Our traveller, whose nerves were completely discomposed, felt it more unbearable than the war of elements to which it had succeeded. He resolved to make a fire, and striking a light, the fuel that lay collected in the hut was soon in a bright blaze. The warmth made him drowsy, but mindful of the watch he had promised to keep, he determined not to sleep. As he sat yawning over the flickering embers, they appeared to form themselves into all sorts of strange images : faces seemed to leer at him from the hearth, with features that bore strong resemblance to those of the goatherd. At length his eye fell on the priest's dagger which was lying on the bench. He drew it, and as he read the motto, an undefined idea that he had done wrong in unsheathing it "*Sin razon*" crossed his mind. He fell into a reverie ; suddenly he heard the distant whistle of the goatherd followed by the fierce growl of his dog. The sounds were repeated, and grasping the dagger, he was about to alarm his friend, when he saw a trap-door open close to him. Two or three steps conducted to a cavern, and stooping, he beheld a number of men, whose appearance convinced him that he was in the presence of a gang of robbers. He remained motionless with astonishment when he felt himself seized by a powerful hand ; the accursed goatherd had grasped him by the throat and was dragging him along. The tightness of the pressure deprived him of all power to call for aid, but he resolved to sell his life dearly.

"*Muchachos!*" exclaimed the goatherd as they approached the robbers, and Seyton saw the blades of their long Spanish knives glisten in their hands. "I promised you a good booty to-night. Here is a rich Englishman who can pay handsomely for the shelter our hut has afforded him."

"Take your reward first," said Seyton, striking him with the dagger as the man loosened his grasp. At this moment a call for help from his companion caused him to struggle with all the energy of despair against the robbers who had seized him, when just as he was overpowered, his eyes opened and he found himself held by the priest and the goatherd.

It was already day-break, and he perceived Marston trying to staunch the blood that flowed from a wound in his arm. Doubtful whether he was asleep or awake, but remembering the suspicions he had already felt of the priest, he exclaimed :

"I was right then, and you are in league with that ruffian."

"My son," said the old man, "what means this? This honest

goatherd came to the village last evening to tell me of your having taken shelter here. Before dawn we started to bring you refreshment, and arrived just in time to prevent you from killing your friend. We have had a hard matter to overpower you; but Heaven be praised!" he continued, "the wound is not severe."

"Merciful God!" exclaimed Seyton, "was it then a dream?"

TEMPEST AND CALM.

WHEN first I gazed upon the Sea,
She was a Giant creature;
Her voice was monstrous, and her face
A fearful raging feature:
She turn'd and toss'd with aspect pale,
And sick'ned with white foam;
A Thing eternal did she seem,
Uneasy in her home.

When next I gazed upon the main,
I saw a fairy sight;
The sun was smiling on the Sea,
And she was clothed in light!
As peaceful as a summer's day,
And stilly as the morn;
The sweetheart of the Earth she look'd,
The gentlest beauty born.
The roof of Heaven was fairest blue,
The zephyrs lost their power;
A jewell'd Princess shone the Sea;
—— It was her bridal hour.

RAMBLES AT RIO:

WITH

A TALE OF THE CORCOVADO.

BY PEREGRINE.

It is certainly a magnificent sight the entrance to the vast harbour of Rio Janeiro. On both sides rise stupendous mountains with many vistas of lovely green vallies between, sinking down almost to the very level of the sea. To the right you see a beautifully placed white castle, with its green and yellow flag floating on the sea breeze, and its three tiers of batteries rising like terraces one above and behind the other. Opposite to it on the left shoots up at about a mile and a half's distance a narrow conical mass of granite to the height of I should think little less than a thousand feet. This is named the Sugar Loaf, and appears completely inaccessible. The arrangement of the lofty mountains behind it takes a curious shape as seen from a vessel entering the harbour—to wit, that of a stout old gentleman with a very high Roman nose, laid out at full length on his back. His head, neck, chest, voluminous paunch, and knees, and turned up toes are laughably plain and correct as well as other parts of the body. The face part is the only one that has a name. It is called Lord Hood's nose, and is itself certainly a remarkable mountain.

As soon as you have passed these, there opens to the right the magnificent basin called Five Fathom Bay. It is nearly circular, at least seven miles across, and has a small gatelike entrance with a high grass-covered rock to one side crowned with a chapel, and united to the land by an airy wooden fabric of a bridge that skips from rock to rock on its way in a manner infinitely picturesque.

Opposite to this bay lies the town of Rio Janeiro sleeping in a hot dusty haze between two small hills mounted with batteries, and crowned with churches, convents, and other religious houses. Close behind it tower the precipitous sides and summits of two lofty mountains, the Corcovado and Tejuca; they and the range from which they rise being covered by a dense forest of a rich dark green. But here I have to take up my parable against this same green. It is all of one shade—nothing is to be seen around on mountain or low ground but the same monotonous tint here, yonder, every where; the only thing that varies it being the dark-grey, almost black granite

precipices, and the white or reddish dots that mark the country plantation-houses. How different from the landscape of my own fair country, where you have green of every complexion, from the shade you can hardly distinguish from golden yellow, through all intermediate hues, to the deep blue tint of aerial distance. Here there appears to be no blue in the atmosphere at all; for even on the balmy evening, if you look toward the far-away mountains, you will find that all the enchantment distance lends them consists in a thick greyish-black haze, as if the air upon and around them were loaded with dust.

But from looking at the town you turn to the right, and your eye sweeps the glassy and isle-gemmed surface of this inland-sea called the harbour. Its further shore you cannot see—it is too distant; but a mighty ridge of mountains more jagged than any saw, whose pinnacles indeed stand up from it as the fingers from your hand, you can see rising far beyond, and with its vast mass shutting from your view one fourth of the face of heaven. This sheet of water is said to be an hundred miles in circumference, and capable of containing all the shipping in the world. When I saw it the portion of it opposite the town was covered with vessels—merchantmen clustering nearest the shore, and outside a goodly array of men of war,—English, French, Brazilian, Neapolitan, and Sardinian frigates, corvettes, brigs, and schooners, presenting, when certain political proceedings in the town drew from them a general salute, as magnificent a sight as man might desire to witness.

But look beyond the ships at those sweet little villages whose white walls shine so in the sun, around that pretty bay on the opposite side of the gut. These are Praya Grande and San Domingo.

"But what," you cry, gazing with excited eyes and horror-stricken countenance—"Look there—there in the water—that object about fifty yards away—look—a body, by Heaven!"

"So it is."

"Why then get the boats out—how can you be so calm?"

"But my good sir, he is dead."

"How do you know that? And if he be, shall we not save the body—have an inquest, and see how he came by his death—and at all events let him have Christian burial?"

"Ha! ha! ha!—excuse my merriment, my dear sir—pardon me—you are not in England now, you are on the other side of the herring-pond—this is America, the New World—the world of republics and freedom, where human creatures are bought and sold like cotton cloth every day—and that is the body of a slave."

"How can that be—don't you see it is white?"

"Pardon me—again you are under a mistake. It is only death taking one of its many ways of showing the white and black man to be brothers. The water has dissolved and washed away the black pigment of the rete mucosum—and now did you ever see such a fresh rosy white on the cheek of Saxon beauty?"

But presently the current of the tide setting out brings the body down close under the ship's side, and looking over with a mixed

feeling of curiosity and horror, you see it lazily thumping with the wash of the small waves against the planks. You now can perceive that it is indeed a human body far advanced in putrefaction, floating back upwards, with the limbs spread out and the head hanging down. It is a negro, you can tell, for on the feet and hands the black skin yet remains, preserving the colouring matter, and making the corpse look like a white man's body with black socks and gloves. You can see multitudes of little fish tug-tugging at the flesh, swimming away a bit and coming back for another mouthful. You only resolve to eat no more American fish; but what is that hanging down deep in the water which the fish come to, but turning away strike it with their tails? It is a rope hanging from the neck.

"He has been murdered!" you cry. "No—he may have died a natural death, or he may have died of neglect and starvation, when his proprietor found his case was beyond hope, and it was useless wasting any more food upon him."

"But whence comes the rope?"

"Oh, suppose you had a dog dead of the mange, and there was a river hard by, would you not make some dirty boy about the neighbourhood put a rope round the brute's neck, drag it down, and heave it in with a stone at the rope's end, to make sure of its sinking?"

"No, I would not! I would give the creature a decent grave in the garden."

"Yes, but you see it is quite different with the Brazilians. When a dog—I mean a negro—dies, they make his brethren in complexion put a rope about his neck, drag him down, and heave him into the harbour."

"Can such things be?—Surely, you don't say that similar things are done in the United States?—certainly men with a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood in their bodies could never be such monsters."

"Why, you see I never was in North America, consequently, I can't speak from my own knowledge about that man-selling land of liberty; only one thing I may tell you, I am not aware of the English and American merchants in Brazil being a whit more tender-hearted than the native Brazilians."

"And is it a common thing to find dead men floating about in this way?"

"Oh, ask any shipmaster who has ever traded to the Brazils, and he will tell you of hundreds."

"Alas, alas, for human nature!"

"But come, do not think of these things: look at the town there with its smoky cloud overhanging it, and the green wood-clad Corcovado rising behind. There will be a boat ready presently, and we can go ashore."

In a minute it is ready, and we take our seats, urged landward by four stout fellows, whose brawny limbs, moulded on the shores of Cornwall, Hants, or Devon, there is small chance will ever in this world be applied to slave labour.

"As we go, look at that hulk up there—that is the 'Crescent'

receiving-ship for captured slaves — there are black men there who have been on board for five years, and never left the ship."

"Why?"

"Because, if the men ventured on shore *they would be stolen*. But yonder, astern of her, do you see those small hookers of things? those are slavers! In one of them were found about three hundred and fifty slaves."

"Bless me, they don't appear to be above forty or fifty tons — how could they contain such a number?"

"Why, you see, they stow them away as you would stow goods — they *pack* them, in fact."

"But a great many must die."

"Oh yes, if they get over one half of the lot they think they have done a good thing; and if they get them safely landed, one voyage is enough to make a man's fortune, for each fresh young negro is sure to fetch in the market a sum little short of two hundred pounds. The price has greatly risen since the efforts to suppress the trade, and, consequently, the temptation to embark capital in it is much increased. I understand a man lately boasted he had made thirty-five thousand pounds by the business in five years. But I'll tell you a yarn about that same receiving-ship, that will probably amuse you till we reach the landing-place. There were two young blacks, a youth and a girl, that had been taken in the same slaver, and probably stolen from the same place in Africa. They were brought on board the Crescent, and soon their extreme mutual attachment became very evident. Most probably it had been an old true love story between them in their own country."

"But some of the young officers desiring to amuse themselves at the negro's expense, gravely informed him one evening, that next morning his dark sweetheart was to go from him for ever, as she was one of a number that were to sail as free labourers for the British West Indies. The poor fellow appeared to take it somewhat to heart; but certainly no one expected to find him next morning — as he was found — strangled by his own hands, and dead. The possibility of a person committing suicide by strangulation (not hanging) is a thing you may be disposed to doubt, conceiving that the pain, and the agonising feeling of want of breath, would make the poor creature relax in his efforts, and shortly stop them altogether, letting the sweet air find access to his lungs, and thus frustrating the attempt. But the completion of the act only shows the energy and determination of this sable Romeo. The way he accomplished it was this. He tied round his neck a sash, or a handkerchief, or it may have been a rope-yarn — then into this he put a stick, and twisting it round and round tighter and tighter, succeeded in putting an end to his existence; proving that, as many sensible people have said, whatever the complexion may be, the heart burns the same all the world over."

"What a romance!"

"No romance at all — it is true — it happened within six months back. But here we are at the landing-place — that great building in front of you is an hotel, as you may see by the sign 'Hotel Pharoux.'

That other here, in the square, is the Emperor's palace — and sure enough there he is — that young silly-looking lad, in the blue uniform, with gold epaulettes, standing at the window, looking out upon the troops that move awkwardly in dingy squads before him. It is a very plain and homely, but extremely large building, and communicates by a covered bridge of three arches across a street with another and larger portion, to which a decent church is attached. There is no attempt at ornament in any part of the structures, with the exception, perhaps, of the church : the whole looks like a range of cotton factories ; and the guard, with their dark uniforms and darker faces, look not unlike the engine-keepers."

The main street of the city, called the Rua Direita, is broad, open, and airy, though it contains no showy shops, nothing but dim dusty stores ; where, however, a good deal of business would appear to be done. All the glare of jewellery, millinery, drapery, and other fancy wares, is reserved for the Rua do Ouvidor, or French street. By the way, it is remarkable, that most of the British in Rio Janeiro are wealthy merchants, holders almost of the whole commercial capital of the country. Most of the French, again, are shopkeepers, bakers, and hotel-keepers ; nevertheless, the French are very numerous, and have a theatre of their own. The English have no theatre, but a very excellent subscription-library and reading-room, and a pretty little church.

From the first moment you step on shore, you cannot help remarking the crowds of negroes hurrying along every where under their burdens. Men and women — every thing they have to carry they carry on the head : — you will see one staggering along with a ponderous bale of goods on his crown, another walking under a jug of water — nay, the very stones of a building you will often find carried from the quarry on the skulls of black fellows. As they run along under their burdens, they always sing a kind of monotonous song, which appears to ease the toil considerably ; sometimes it consists of merely one word, repeated loudly and sonorously every fourth or fifth step ; sometimes a sentence, repeated with equal regularity. When there are a good many of them, this sing-song is not unmusical ; and often one of the number fills up the intervals of the staves by shaking a gigantic tin rattle, similar to a child's in England, with his left hand, while, with his right, he holds his burden steady upon his head.

And yet I cannot aver that the negroes appear unhappy : they seem always in good spirits, and are continually joking and laughing with each other when they meet : indeed, where there are many of them congregated, as about the public fountains, the sound of their merriment may be heard at a great distance. You may see old grey-headed men poking each other in the ribs, and pushing one another about like boys ; playing, in fact, as they meet in little groups of three and four, with their heavy burdens on their heads ; while their strange, shrill, metallic-sounding laughter rings along the road or street, the scarcely lighter complexioned Brazilians passing them with the same look wherewith you would regard a horse neighing in front of an omnibus.

As I was walking along the shady side of one of their streets, I saw a gang of about a dozen blacks employed in carrying bales of goods up from the harbour into the town. They were all exceedingly heavy, powerful men, and they moved along under their ponderous burdens with a long swinging trot, at every fourth step enunciating in a chorus of loud and deep voices the syllable "bom*," while the sweat poured down their muscular shoulders, and their great chests expanded and subsided like the measured heave of the ground swell. There was one of them at the rear stopped and looked cautiously around him, then hurried across the street to where a woman was moving along with a heavily laden basket on her head, and an infant hanging behind her from her shoulders. I marked him especially: he had the most intellectual countenance I have ever seen in a negro. The woman, first looking stealthily about, drew round with a smile of fond recognition the child from behind her, and the father took it in his arms and kissed it rapturously, while the little thing danced and kicked about, and crowed with joy, and patted his great face with its tiny black hands. I stood still, regarding the scene, and a pleasing train of thought had begun in my mind, when, on a sudden, some one seemed to catch his eye. I looked and saw a thin dark Brazilian, dressed in white cotton, with a Panama hat on his head, and a short slender bamboo in his hand, turn the corner. The negro hurriedly returned the child to its mother, and turned from her with an expression in his countenance I shall never be able to describe. It spoke a manly intellect utterly debased — strong passions for ever crushed — a soul prostrated by oppression, never more to rise in this world. There was in it a cowardice evidently not native there, but implanted by man's tyranny; an unnatural submissiveness, and seeming confession of fault; a semi-idiotic look of entreaty, as if for pardon or mercy, which sat ill, ill on the expressive features a moment before so warmly lighted up, and in strange contrast to the gigantic frame whose muscles and sinews moved beneath the skin like the levers and cranks of powerful machinery. Hastily taking up the chorus of "bom! bom!" he hurried after his brethren in captivity, endeavouring, by the tremendous exertion of his limbs, to overtake them, though they were far in advance, and the bale of goods on his head would have crushed to the ground the stoutest drayman in London.

But let us return to the town. We are moving up the Rua do Ouvidor. It is a narrow street, with a big, stinking gutter running down the middle, and abundance of elegant shops on each side, — the goldsmiths, especially, making a brilliant display; and well they may, for their whole stock is usually in their window. There are, of course, busts of aristocratic-looking beauties of wax in the hair-cutters' windows; but they are European, and done after the English and French ideas of good looks, and must, indeed, be a sore puzzle to the natives, unaware, as they are, of any living complexion other than a sort of greenish-pale tint.

* "Good!" in Portuguese and Brazilian.

And here is another thing I must pause upon — Brazilian beauty. I only, during six weeks' residence in Rio, saw two really pretty female faces; and the ladies who had them were Italians, employed at the opera. I sat in the pit of their opera-house, and, with a glass, scanned the boxes all round the vast building, but hardly a pretty brunette even could I see. The universal style of features seemed small black eyes, thin lips, thinner jaws, scanty black hair, and the peculiar greenish-white complexion. An expression of studied artificial coldness and hauteur filled rather than animated the faces; and the attitudes in which the owners sat were angular and constrained. It is a curious thing that Europeans going out to Brazil have their complexions changed in six months, at most, to this greenish hue — a colour which would seem to be connected, in some way, with the universal green of the country, as if it were, by some unexplained optical means, produced by the reflection of the light from the vegetation, which is so exuberant as not to be lost sight of for any half-a-dozen steps in the thickest part of their most populous towns.

They have two theatres in Rio. One the theatre of San Pedro d'Alcantara. To this I went one evening. The house is very large, and constructed on a principle admirably calculated for such a building in such a climate. The walls are pierced with large round holes, so numerous as to give them the appearance of mighty sieves. These holes are in rows, and open into airy galleries, from which the tiers of boxes branch. A person, then, seated in this building is as thoroughly in the way of the air as is a bird in a wire cage; and a delightful coolness constantly pervades it, notwithstanding the heat from the innumerable lights that burn all round. The interior of the house, though great in extent, was but shabby in point of decoration, and also in point of cleanliness — the scenery was squalid and mean, and the dresses looked as if bought second-hand; but there was one redeeming thing — the *chandelier*. It was certainly the finest I have ever seen in a theatre.

The piece was "La Donna della Lago," a version of The Lady of the Lake, and might have been a good-enough thing in its way, but I, unfortunately, am not qualified to pronounce upon operatic performances; believing that they have no merit except that of being in fashion; or that, if they have, I am by nature disqualified to perceive it. In fact, the whole business looked more ludicrous to me than any farce; though the worthy Brazilians seemed to take it all in serious part, and criticised and applauded their own Grisis and Rubinis in right good earnest; and also a squinting Lablache, who, without the rotundity of his European prototype, bellowed in a way that appeared highly satisfactory to all hands.

Their ideas of the Scottish costume appeared to be in a high degree original. Roderic Dhu was clad in a long petticoat of common checked cotton, and had a sort of turban of the same stuff on his head, with a quantity of feathers stuck into the folds; and wore a pair of hideous black boots, going far up the leg, and lost to sight beneath the petticoat aforesaid. The rough leather pouch worn by the Highlanders in front had been a sore puzzler to the Brazilian wardrobe-man: he had

supplied its place by a small dark apron, that harmonised wonderfully with the black boots. Two Highland armies were introduced thus in warlike array, each headed by a complete brass band ; and, wonderful to relate, every kilted bandsman had his pibroch properly set down on a card, and stuck on the top of his instrument. Then two chieftains—veritable sons of the Gael—came forward in a terrible passion, and, according to the true Highland feeling and custom, began fighting furiously ; not with claymores, but with a dreadful duet, singing at each other with a ferocity that struck the whole audience with astonishment and awe.

I did not stay for the ballet ; for the sight of a half-naked woman capering about does not excite in me the anomalous feelings, the enjoyment of which some persons gild over by a flourish about the poetry of motion.

There is one superb walk, or ride, in the neighbourhood of Rio. A very fine aqueduct supplies the town with water, which it brings from sources, from seven to ten miles distant, on the sides and toward the summit of the Corcovado mountain ; and along the course of this aqueduct is the walk I allude to. There are many public fountains supplied from it, and from these again the inhabitants have the water conveyed to their houses in tubs, on the heads of slaves. The most striking of the fountains arrests your eye when you first step on shore. It stands in the middle of the palace square, and is not an ill-looking piece of architecture. Some inscriptions, one of which is a Latin epigram, adorn it, and it is surmounted by a stone model of an artificial sphere, an object which the Brazilians have on their flag, and bear generally as an emblem—probably connected with some idea of the old Portuguese glory.

In one corner of the town the aqueduct crosses a very fine double tier of arches. Here you ascend a serpentine steep, and upon getting to the level of the watercourse a slightly inclined path takes you along its side, by many a leafy winding, more than half-way up the mountain. A worthy sailor, a friend of mine, was my companion on this journey, and we were provided with plenty of cigars, a couple of biscuits, and a small bottle of rum ; while I, in a secure pocket, bore a small fairly-written MS. Now the history of this MS. was as follows :—I had been dining with a medical officer on board one of her Majesty's ships in the harbour, and in the course of conversation had mentioned my intention of climbing the Corcovado. "Well," quoth he, immediately, "I have the manuscript of a tale which I wrote with regard to that same mountain. It is the substance of a yarn told me by a young merchant here in Rio, who has since settled down at Monte Video ; and as he was a well-educated young man, I have no doubt it is true. You will find it a very interesting story ; and before intrusting it to you, I must exact a promise that you will not read it until seated or standing on the very summit of the mountain."

I immediately pledged myself, and received the papers, neatly folded up and sealed.

Well, my companion and I ascended the path, and moved up the country along the line of the aqueduct. We had not walked half

an hour ere we found ourselves winding through a regular South American forest. I never in my life saw such vegetation. Were you to take a cart-load of leaves, and empty them in a heap, I do think they could hardly lie closer than they did upon the branches of this wood; and all green — of a colour most lovely, though monotonous; for here the tree in no season is unclad, nor does the summer which they have for a winter ever sear the hue of any foliage. The water was conducted downwards along the precipitous sides of different prongs of the parent chain of highland, and often along the very narrow edge of such steepes, where you had views of deep well-like vallies, their nearly perpendicular sides all wood-clad, and green as a garden arbour, that green being variegated by the snowy walls of plantation houses, and the bright red cultivated soil at the bottom. The clear “un-European” laugh of the negroes rose, refined by height and distance, in tinkling reverberations from precipice to precipice, emulating the shrillness and melody of the cicala piping on every twig. It was an awe-striking sight, standing on the edge of the narrow pathway, to part the clustering bushes, and look down the wood-mantled precipices; for the tree trunks seemed to shoot clusteringly from out the all but perpendicular steepes, and, rising branchless to a great height, till, by loftiness of stem, they had gained a small distance from the face of the rocks, gave out a dense mass of foliage impervious to light as so much solid stone. The trees rising to a height of fifty or sixty, often of at least seventy feet, ere they had room to bear a leaf, their foliage looked like a vast green mat hung up in the sun upon the face of the hills, and supported in that position by innumerable gigantic poles, stuck against rather than into the rocks, as a dirty kitchen wench would fix a candle against a wall. And when you looked down among these naked stems, they and the dense brushwood at their roots seemed steeped in a faint greenish light, or rather dimness, that, far away down towards the vallies, became a dark verdant mistiness, through which objects were no longer clearly distinguishable; while every where, above and below, guanas, lizards, birds, and butterflies, all tinted alike in this mystic light, flitted and flew from stem to stem in the silent, cool, and fragrant greenness. And when we rolled stones, and threw them down, and they went smashing now against the rocks, now against the trunks, — anon crashing and tearing their way through the thick topmost foliage of a lofty tree, which topmost foliage was not ten feet distant from the face of the rock that held its root some sixty feet farther down; and when these stones went rolling and knocking, their sounds growing fainter in the leafy green mists far below, till only a louder smash could reach the ear, we experienced a feeling as closely approaching the sublime as I can well conceive; and, considering that a slip of the foot might precipitate ourselves after the stones, were glad to draw close to the wall of the aqueduct. But all overhead was light, and beauty, and stirring life. Blossoms of every description sprang up by the path; birds, of all shapes and plumage, fluttered and chirped among the branches; and big butterflies, of every gorgeous hue, and villanous-looking dragon-flies, with their scaly blue

lustre and halo-like flutter of misty gauze wings, continually crossed us, leading us often in fruitless chase. Far above us might be seen the magnificent man-of-war bird, the most graceful in form and flight of all winged creatures, leisurely sailing the air from his nest in the untrodden clefts of the mountain to seek his prey, pirate-like, upon the sea. From branches over our heads hung suspended, by invisible thread, the tree spider, in his little silken nest, popping his head out and in, and heaving in or paying out his cable as he desired to rise or fall. Bees and all winged insects hummed through the air, while the earth teemed with ants and every creeping insect; a tiny stir among the grass or leaves indicating the rapid dart of the lizard, guana, or some other reptile. And over all glowed, in his full majesty, the life-inspiring sun; not, as in other climes, giving coy and temporary glances of his glory from between the veils of clouds, but rolling alone in the blue sky the sole object in heaven.

Up we went, rounding now one angle, anon another precipice, and at each obtaining new views of the rich country below, with its woods, fields, and lagoons; of the bay, with its innumerable islands and multitude of ships dotting its surface; of the battery, or church-crowned rocks that abound in the vicinity of the town; and of Rio itself, sleeping obscure beneath its cloud of dusty haze.

At length, when we had marched about five miles, and were now some fifteen hundred feet above the town, we came to the immediate source of the lower aqueduct, where a small mountain stream rushing into the cistern in part supplied it; a second portion being brought round in a little artificial gutter from another part of the mountain. This second source we followed; but soon left it, striking up a path alongside a wattle-built cottage, where resided a Brazilian soldier, a sort of perpetual sentry upon the good repair of the waterworks near this point. Shortly after passing this cottage the path became exceedingly wild: on one side of it generally rose a precipice; on the other an abyss descended, where the mighty trees grew with their naked stems shooting far aloft, one from almost every square yard of surface, frequently shutting out from us all view of sun or sky; the only thing we could see besides stems, rocks, and foliage, being the winding path stretching a little in advance or behind, as it were under an arcade of verdure, while a subdued cool greenish light showed us the damp trodden soil of the pathway, and the brushwood so luxuriantly dense as almost to appear of massive solidity. Here we saw the coffee-bush growing wild, with its cherry-red berries — there the cocoa-nut tree, bare, however, of fruit, for the season was their winter. Guavas, mangoes, plantains, and bananas, and all tropical plants, were here; for their seeds, wafted by the winds from the rich plains below, had caught root and sprang into forest existence as trees or bushes.

In this wild path we walked on about two miles more, till we reached another portion — the highest of these waterworks. A small rivulet of crystal water was brought round in hollow tiles from far behind the shoulder of the mountain. After following this a little, we came upon what you could hardly call a hamlet: it consisted of one house and two or three huts, while an open shed, with a bench

under it for working, stood in the midst. The house was inhabited by a Brazilian and his family, the huts by negroes: thereafter there was about half a mile of ascent — tremendous climbing! — they were no ordinary lungs that could serve a man up those dizzy steeps. Nevertheless we bent our breasts forward to the task, and, panting and exhausted, even after very frequent stoppages, at last found ourselves close to the summit, which is two thousand three hundred and sixty feet above the town's level. This summit is double; consisting of two points of rock, with a gash about forty feet deep between them. A small bridge of iron, placed by one of the emperors, formerly connected them, and an iron chain-rail surrounded each, to prevent people from tumbling off and going sheer down the precipices. There were also a flag-staff for signalling, and a small iron house or box for shelter. All is now gone, save the slender iron posts that supported the chain, and a few steps cut in the rock that formerly led to the bridge. Each of the summits is a separate rock; not flat, but rounded on the upper surface, so that a puff of wind would blow you off; indeed you have hardly room to stand secure, for neither of the rocks is more than twenty feet across, and hardly a square yard is level enough to stand upon securely, it being gradually rounded off into the stupendous bare precipices that form three sides of the Corcovado, or Humpback mountain.

The view was magnificent in the extreme: eighty miles at least of the coast up and down of South America could the eye sweep, with their hills, and eternal forests, and rocks, and isles, and bays, and league-long beaches, to which you could not tell in the distance whether it was the silvery sand or the ever-rolling surf that gave the dazzling whiteness. The immense basin of the harbour lay stretched beneath, thirty miles up into the country, like a mighty sheet of frosted silver, for a thick white vapoury haze like a film dimmed its surface; but many wooded islands spotted it with emerald beauty; and the big sweeping lateen sail, half concealed in the sunny vapour, flitted here and there athwart it, sometimes near and plainly skimming like a white bird — anon merging faintly into sight in the dim distance, shining like a bright speck for a minute, then fading into nothingness, so far, far was it away. Then what a stretch of many-coloured cultivated land expanded itself between its shore and that ridge, of which the "humpback" on which we stood formed one extremity! A vast plain of red alluvial soil, fenced into fields, and bearing the rich sugar cane, cotton, and coffee plants — the vegetable wealth of the earth — dotted, too, every here and there with the white mansions of its lords, each under its grove of mighty trees — tamarind, mango, or cocoa-nut. Innumerable were the bays and creeks jutting from the great sheet into the land — many the broad blue lagoons connected with it, often by a scarcely perceptible neck of water, and their own tributary streams diversified with wooded islets.

As you looked straight down (for you could do that and see ground two thousand and odd feet beneath you and not an hundred feet from you horizontally) — as you looked down, the streets and squares of Rio

lay plain as a map ; and, observing steadily, you could see the black dots of vehicles moving hither and thither ; and the boats and canoes going and returning between the shipping and the shore, and the white surf breaking on the beach. Close under another stupendous precipice were the Emperor's botanic gardens, and you could perceive the yellow walks amid the green plants, like a pattern on calico, while the fountain could be plainly observed playing in the midst.

It was on the whole a sight whereon the eye was not feasted but made drunken rather ! — it is the nearest phrase I can think of to communicate withal the idea of the feeling produced.

When we had surveyed it until oppressed with its magnificence, we sat down on the middle of the rounded rock, and opening the MS. I began to read the tale of the young merchant, as written by my naval friend, and entitled

A STORY OF THE CORCOVADO.

When I first came out to Brazil I got a situation as clerk in the counting-house of Diaz, Brown, and Company, the extensive merchants at Rio Janeiro. The only other white clerk in their place of business was one Lopez do Pereira, a Portuguese by descent and birth, but educated in England. Of course we became companions ; and although he was eccentric to absurdity, I found him a very agreeable fellow on the whole ; his whims being often irresistibly ridiculous, while he was not at all annoyed at any laughter, but would laugh himself with his whole heart, while he still persisted in the proceedings that caused it. These were often, while very odd, both hurtful to himself and painful to his friends — as, for instance : —

The inhabitants of Madeira have a singular head dress ; it consists of a little blue scull-cap, lined with red, not sufficient to cover the head of an infant, and having a small stiff pigtail about four inches in length projecting into the air from the middle of it. This curious affair they perch on a bushy head of hair, and certainly acquire thereby an aspect sufficiently remarkable to a stranger. Now this cap Pereira had seen at that island, on his voyage out from England, and once he took it in his head to wear one, made under his direction, of a similar construction, at Rio ; nor did he leave off his noticeable head-piece till an attack of brain fever made him adopt a more shady covering. He was, of course, a Roman Catholic, and devoutly believed in the agency of the devil, upon whom, when his whims had left him, he invariably laid the blame.

One day, when we had been about a year together, the day being a holyday, we resolved upon an expedition to the top of the Corcovado. Accordingly hiring horses we rode up till horses could go no further. As we rode I began to laugh and question him with regard to his singular weakness. My thoughts were directed to this subject by seeing him turn round on the horse's back and ride with his face to the tail ; and this though the animal was very spirited, and the

path was so narrow that one horse only had room to go upon it ; with the stone wall of the aqueduct on one side, and a succession of wooded precipices on the other. On my inquiring the cause of this remarkable manœuvre he replied, laughing loudly himself, that he thought it was a good idea, as he could talk to me better face to face, for I was riding in the rear. But I remarked that we could converse quite well without seeing each other, and reminded him of the misers, who talked in the dark to save candles. Upon this he stated that as all the view lay behind us and nothing in front but woods, this was the most rational way of riding for an admirer of the picturesque. I bantered him out of this argument also, when he plainly confessed that he rode in that way from an internal impulse, no more to be resisted or controlled by him than the decrees of fate — that there was a devil within him who prompted him to make himself ridiculous, and that he could no more gainsay this mastering spirit than fly in the air. For the rest of the ride he continued to practise this uncavalier-like style of horsemanship, to the vast entertainment of sundry blackies we encountered, working at small repairs on the aqueduct, or bringing down loads of sticks from the woods. Nevertheless he continued to talk with infinite good humour of his own curious turn of mind. He told me that this devil of his ceased its malicious promptings at all times when heavy business occupied him — that cold bathing went far against it ; and that once, when for a considerable time under anti-inflammatory treatment for some complaint, it entirely disappeared.

At length we arrived at the last collection of houses on the ascent, and here we left our horses, mounting the last steeps on foot.

As soon as we stood upon the rocky ball, and looked around us, overwhelmed by the grandeur and danger of the scene, I was full of exclamations. From the brim of the rock we stood on, the sight leaped down direct to fields and lagoons, two or three thousand feet beneath us ; and the precipices, from what I could see of them, made my blood cold. The vastness of the horizon, with the distance and diversity of the parts filling it up — the silence, the solitude, the apparent eternal nature of the mighty rocks — even of the forests — all these ideas, combined with the precarious nature of our position on this airy and often cloud-covered pinnacle, and the certain dreadful fate that awaited one who should topple from such a stupendous height (for on three sides were precipices of from one to two thousand feet), raised my mind to a very high state of excitement. But when I looked at Pereira, expecting to see in him an equal enjoyment, I observed his dark Portuguese features pale with that tawny colour which constitutes the pallor of southern Europeans ; his bloodless lips quivered, and there was a sort of convulsive starting of different muscles of his body.

"What," said I, "you surely are not afraid of falling? — come near to the centre, and your head will not swim so much."

"Afraid!" he replied, vaguely and incoherently. "No! — Yes — afraid — for you; — save yourself, D —! for God's sake, save yourself!"

"Why, man, there is no fear — get you down first, you are nearest the path."

"No! we shall never go down that path — *the demon, D——, the demon in my heart prompts me to throw you from this pinnacle sheer to destruction*, and he will not but be obeyed! O Mother of Deity! Queen of Heaven! look on me in mercy!"

As he spoke, my heart smote my side violently; and I felt for a moment sick to death, for the recollection of his character and strange eccentricities arose before my mind.

"Gracious Heaven!" said I, "you cannot mean what you say?" As I stood horror-stricken, he clasped his hands, and wringing them slowly, but with his whole strength, raised them above his head, looking upward at the same time with eyes sparkling from unnatural fire, and grinding his teeth, as if with anguish, a moment — and, with a wild howl of despair that rung like the cry of a vulture, he sprang upon me!

A mercy it was that he gave me that warning! I was prepared so far, that his onset drove me back but one step: another step would have been death to me! He grasped me with his whole strength, and with the convulsive gripe of mortal fear I closed upon him; and thus, in dread embrace, we stood straining with the whole power of every sinew. It could not be called struggling, it was the slow and steady application of every force and every art of two athletic young men striving, the one in the frenzy of madness, the other in the dread of immediate dissolution. Now he would bend me a little, now I him! Oh what an agony that minute was to me!

At length, in about two minutes, I knew that his strength was giving way: we were equally matched in strength, but I had the full chest and long wind, produced by hard exercise through all my youth in a far northern climate; he was narrow-chested, and soon began to pant. Perceiving this, I compressed his ribs with my whole strength, and, bending in his back, gradually brought him down on the rock. But the moment he was down he commenced struggling violently, and rolled us both over toward the awful brink. I thought I was gone, and clutched the rough rock with my fingers till the nails were torn from them. Providentially my hand came against one of the rusted iron supports that had, of old, upheld the chain, and I grasped it with that clutch commonly called the death-gripe. Holding on by this, and getting my legs about it so as to have a good purchase, while he still struggled ceaselessly with hand and teeth to dislodge me, I caught hold of the hair of his temples, and dashed his head violently against the rock. The blow affected his brain; the eyes which had just been glaring upon me in maniacal fury now rolled obliquely in their sockets, and his motions were no longer directed against me. With both hands I repeated the blow, and he remained motionless; still I was not sure of him, for I had read and heard that the insane are very cunning, and adopt many schemes to accomplish their ends; so, putting one hand to his heart, and being able to perceive only a very faint and scarcely discernible beating, I got up and drew him to the middle of the rock. Then resting for a moment to

breathe and to thank Heaven that I had been saved alive from this fearful encounter, I began to descend the rock, dragging him after me till I got on a secure path, when I shouldered him and carried him to where we had left our horses. Here I got some blacks to carry him down to the city of Rio Janeiro, and conveyed him to the house of our mutual employer, Mr. Brown.

As we were quite by ourselves, I might have accounted for his injuries by a supposed fall among the rocks, but I preferred telling the truth as it is written here. An inquiry was made according to the law of Brazil, and I was declared free of all blame; whilst Pereira, who was then recovering his bodily health, was condemned to restraint in a madhouse for life.

I never afterwards could look up to the pinnacles of Corcovado without feelings of horror being called up in my mind; and so painful was this to me, that I was ultimately led to transport myself and my fortunes to Monte Video.

Such was the MS. When I had done reading it, we both got up, and curiously enough began to dodge about, keeping a wary distance, and each apparently afraid to come near the other; at length, one of us getting to the approach slipped down, and the other cautiously followed him: when we had arrived at a safe place, we each began to laugh in the other's face.

"What was the matter with you?"

"I was afraid some irresistible devil would prompt you ——"

"So was I, as to you."

"Pshaw! did you ever know any thing so ridiculous, as two fellows to be so wrought upon by a tale?"

And thus conversing, we descended to a village in a valley, where we sat down at a small public house to enjoy an evening repast under a green tree.

And here, reader, end, for the time, my Rambles at Rio Janeiro.

EPIGRAM.

CHARM'D with a drink which Highlanders compose,

A German traveller exclaim'd with glee, —

"Potztausend! sare, if dis is Athol Brose,

How goot dere Athol Boetry must be!"

THE MONK'S FINGER.

THE snow which had ceased for some hours again fell in heavy flakes as a party of the monks of St. Bernard, carrying spades and pickaxes, descended the mountain in hopes of rendering assistance to some travellers, of whose danger they had just received intimation.

While they were absent on this charitable mission several persons who had already sought refuge at the convent occupied the apartment appropriated to strangers. Two young men seated at a table drawn close into the spacious chimney carried on a whispered conversation, only interrupted by the sound of a bell that tolled heavily at intervals.

"Hark!" said one of them, setting down the glass he had just raised to his lips, "there is the bell again—surely it must announce some misfortune?"

"A procession was expected from St. Pierre," answered an Italian, whose sallow hue and deep sunken eye formed a striking contrast to the broad open forehead and healthy complexion of the former speaker; "the brothers have probably set out in hopes of meeting it."

"I do not envy them their mission at this hour and in such a season," said another of the party.

"The good monks think little of themselves where the safety of their fellow-creatures is concerned," returned the first speaker: "were I a Catholic I should almost feel inclined to become a brother of the order."

"You are a heretic, Signor?" remarked the Italian, his dark brows contracting as he spoke: "what brings you to our Catholic land?"

"Even that which has brought you many another heretic," answered the young man: "I am an artist, and come to see the wonderful works of your countrymen. — How now, brother Enrico," he said, interrupting himself, as a monk hurried through the apartment. "The alarm bell still ringing—have you no news of your procession?"

"We fear some misfortune has happened," was the answer. "One of our dogs is barking loudly at a distance, and another has returned, and evidently wishes us to follow him."

Every one seemed anxious for the news from without, and for some time the silence was unbroken, except by the sound of the bell, which now tolled incessantly, as a guide to any persons who might have lost their way. At length a party, rescued by the exertions of the monks from a situation of great peril, entered the apartment. It consisted of an English gentleman called Bertie, who was travelling with his sister and daughter, a young man of the name of Mitford, the accepted lover of the latter, and a Swiss whom they had met on the road.

"Are you really safe, my Emily?" said Mitford, as he assisted his betrothed to take off her cloak, which was covered with snow: "do you feel no ill effects from the cold?"

"I am quite safe and well," she returned, "thanks to these good fathers. How can we sufficiently show them our gratitude?" She took the hand of one of the brothers; but gently withdrawing it, he bowed his head and said meekly, —

"We have done no more than our duty, lady. It is to Heaven that thanks for your preservation are due: all we ask is, that you should join us in prayers for the soul of him who has been less fortunate than yourselves."

"That we will do willingly," was the reply. — "And you, dear aunt, how do you feel?" she continued.

"Half dead with fear and cold, child," returned the other lady.

"You have had a narrow escape," said the artist, to whom Mr. Bertie had already recounted their adventures.

"Indeed we had," said Miss Bertie. "For my part, when the alarm of an avalanche was given, I stood as if rooted to the spot, and my brother could scarcely drag me away."

"I ought to have told you to stand still," said her brother, "you would then have run fast enough."

"Are there no hopes of saving the poor young Frenchman?" inquired her niece.

"They are still digging for him, Emily," returned her lover, "and I trust he may yet be saved. Instances have been known of the revival of persons who have lain for hours buried in the snow."

"It will not be so in this case," was uttered in a solemn voice — "he is gone for ever!"

These words caused all eyes to turn on the speaker. He was a tall thin man with a stoop in his figure that seemed the result of ill-health rather than of age. His high forehead was bare, except where a few stray locks of a jetty hue shaded his temples, and his eyes, large and lustrous, were remarkable for an expression of deep melancholy. He had been the companion of the young man whose fate they were deploring, and happening to ascend the mountain at the same time as the other travellers, the whole party had been nearly involved in one common calamity.

"You say he is past recovery, sir?" said Mr. Bertie. "I trust your evil foreboding will not be fulfilled."

"Unhappily my forebodings are always fulfilled," returned the Swiss. "I possess the power of foreseeing the deaths of those with whom I am connected, and my health and happiness have fallen a sacrifice to this unfortunate gift."

"Such a power would no doubt have a very unfavourable effect on any person's nerves," observed Mr. Bertie, drily, eyeing the speaker in a manner that implied a doubt of his sanity. The latter was silent for a moment, and then continued, —

"My poor friend! Three days ago I saw him lying just as he must now be — his long black hair hanging damp and uncurled over his pale face; his clothes torn and wet, and his mouth filled with snow." As he finished speaking he fixed his eyes on the door, footsteps were heard without, and four monks entered carrying a bier. As they passed through the room the cloak which covered the corpse fell to the

ground, and showed the body of the ill-fated Frenchman lying exactly as the stranger had described him. An exclamation of horror was uttered by all present.

"It is certainly remarkable," said the young artist, as the stretcher was carried out, "that you should have been able to foretell so exactly the appearance of your fellow-traveller after his death."

"I do not see any thing very surprising in being able to predict the manner in which a body would appear which you knew had been buried in snow," rejoined Mr. Bertie.

"I see you disbelieve me," said the Swiss mildly: "you are not the first who has done so."

"Be assured," returned the other, "I do not doubt your veracity, but I know enough of the power of imagination to believe that the sight of these mountains covered with eternal snow, and the ideas of avalanches which are inseparable from them, might have suggested the melancholy image that we have unhappily seen realised."

"For my part," said the artist, "I do not absolutely discredit the existence of what is called supernatural agency. A circumstance once happened to myself"——he stopped as if unwilling to say more.

"Oh pray tell us what it was," said Miss Bertie: "I delight in all ghost stories, and, in spite of my brother, promise before-hand to believe every word of what you relate."

Thus encouraged, the young man began his tale:—"I am an Irishman; and though a heretic, a class of persons to whom that gentleman," bowing, as he spoke to the Italian, "seems to have a great dislike, he probably knows that there is no want of rigid Catholics in my country. It was my fate to become attached to a beautiful girl whose family was of that creed: her only protectress was an aunt, whose pride would have proved a strong objection to my suit, had there been no difference of religion in the case; but, the two obstacles united, both Norah and I knew would be considered insuperable. Instead, therefore, of trying to gain her consent, we agreed to see each other by stealth; and as opportunities of meeting were not easily found, she promised to receive me in her aunt's house after the good lady should have retired to rest. Their residence was an old family mansion, dilapidated and half gone to ruin"——

"Haunted, I suppose?" interrupted Miss Bertie.

"If it were not, it certainly ought to have been," returned the artist, "for it was gloomy enough for more than one dark deed to have been committed within its walls; but in our country, old mansions are more infected with benshees and spirits than with ghosts. I had climbed in at a window that had been purposely left unbarred, and found myself in a large room, unfurnished, except by a few old-fashioned high-backed chairs and an antique table that seemed to have stood there for centuries. Several windows had been built up, but one remained that was large enough to have made a respectable figure in a church, and fortunately for me, who had no light, its small diamond-shaped panes admitted the faint beams of a very watery moon. Stealing cautiously to one of the chairs, I patiently waited the arrival of Norah. Hour after hour passed without her appearing, and twenty

times I started to my feet, as I heard footsteps, light, but regular, pace up and down the staircase."

"You probably had rats in your old family mansion," said Mr. Bertie, smiling.

"Your surmise is no doubt correct," returned the young Irishman, "although at the time the illusion was so complete, that I could have sworn some person, coming to the door, paused a moment before turning the lock. As I sat watching the passing shadows cast by a large willow tree without, the branches of which, waving in the wind, were faintly reflected by the moonlight on the wainscoting of the room, midnight sounded from the steeple of the neighbouring church, and seemed to bring with it a chilling feel—a dread of some undefined evil. All at once I beheld Norah standing near me. I sprang from my seat, but ere I could clasp her in my arms she had vanished. Daylight soon began to break, and, fearing discovery, I retired. I never saw my Norah again. The following day I learned that she had been taken very ill on the previous night, and ere a week had passed I followed her to the grave."—He paused.

"I cannot say that your story brings conviction to me," said Mr. Bertie, "though I have no doubt that you believe the circumstance; but you must recollect that you had been watching *shadows* all night. I will now relate something that happened to myself. I was making a tour last year through Scotland, and in a sorry-looking inn, where I was forced to put up for the night, was accommodated with much such a room as you have described. In fact, it was the village ball-room; but, being little in requisition for that purpose, had been furnished with beds for travellers. The moon was shining brightly when I was awaked by a noise, and starting up I saw—yes, distinctly saw—the figure of a nun standing by the window. I called to her, but, receiving no answer, I sprang from my bed, and grasped—my own cloak, that, hanging on a clothes-horse over which a towel had been thrown, had assumed the exact appearance of a holy sister. No sooner had I returned to bed than, in spite of my better judgment, I could not take my eyes from the figure, and, resolving not to be annoyed with it any longer, I removed the cloak and destroyed my nun for ever. Some persons," he continued, looking at the artist, "would have felt certain that they had seen an apparition."

"I certainly cannot convince you," returned the other, "that what I witnessed was no deception of the senses; but I assure you the figure of Norah appeared to me quite different from the shadows to which you liken it."

"I can believe your story," said the Swiss, "for it resembles my own. I too lost a beloved mistress to whom I was to have been united in a few weeks. It was in Switzerland. We had climbed the ruins of a castle, perched on a lofty crag: to tease me, my betrothed had hid herself, and as in searching for her I leaned over the broken wall, I saw her lying a mangled corpse on the rocks below. The cry of horror which escaped me at the dreadful sight brought her from her concealment; I told her what I had seen, and like myself she was greatly affected by the circumstance. Alas! the vision was too fatally

realised. Not long after she was seized with a violent fever, followed by delirium. The persons commissioned to watch her neglected their charge, she escaped from the house, and her heated brain retaining probably some recollection of the last evening we had passed together, she wandered up to the castle: from that very wall she either fell or threw herself, and her body was found lying just as I had seen it in my vision." He seemed so affected at the remembrance of the fatal occurrence, that Mr. Bertie contented himself with whispering to his future son-in-law that it was clear the vision had worked its own fulfilment, by driving the person who was the subject of it out of her senses.

"After all I have heard," said Mitford, "I feel encouraged to relate a strange circumstance that happened lately to myself, leaving it to Mr. Bertie to explain the marvellous part of it. You remember, as we came up the Rhine, our visit to the convent near Bonn, where the dead monks lay?"

"I shall not easily forget it," said Emily, "for it made such a painful impression on me, that, had I not feared your ridicule, I should not have remained in the vault."

"I saw you looking very pale, Emily," returned her lover, "and for that reason would not tell you what I had done."

"And for Heaven's sake what did you do?" said Miss Bertie. "You frighten me already, for I was as much disgusted at the sight of those mummies as Emily."

"While the guide was explaining their history," replied he, "I was busy examining one particular figure. Why I should have fixed on him I do not know; but the more I looked the stronger grew the attraction, till his features became completely impressed on my memory. I see him now—his high nose, his arched eyebrows, his small mouth with the lips tightly compressed, and the long peaked beard. At length the fascination became so strong that I could not resist touching him, and I stroked his face several times."

"Oh, Henry!" cried his betrothed, looking almost as pale as she had done at the sight of the monks themselves, "how could you do so?" But her lover, taking no notice of her exclamation, went on.

"More than once I tried to turn away, but the mysterious attraction drew me back again, till—laugh at me if you will—I fancied I could not leave the vault without some relic of the figure that had impressed me so powerfully. I seized one of the dried parchment-like fingers and wrenched it off; and, as I did so, I could have sworn that the dead man sighed, for a hollow sound—a sort of groan—echoed through the vault."

"Gracious heavens! how dreadful!" shrieked Miss Bertie. "I remember hearing it, but thought you were trying to frighten Emily and me." Mitford continued.

"On my return to the hotel I placed the relic in my portmanteau and retired to bed. I know not how long I had slept, when I was roused by hearing myself called, and, starting up, I saw a figure in the dress of a monk leaning over my portmanteau. He threw every thing aside till he came to the stolen finger, and, unwrapping it from the paper,

he tried to replace it on his hand: at each attempt it fell to the ground, till, finding his efforts to fix it useless, he turned towards me. Once more I saw the countenance that had exercised such a strange influence over me — the high nose, the arched eyebrows, the pointed beard, all just as I had seen them, except the eyes, which, instead of having a glassy appearance like those of the dead, seemed to flame angrily at me. At length he replaced the finger in the portmanteau, and slowly approaching the bed where I lay as one spell-bound, he commenced stroking my face with his dismembered hand, just as I had done his in the morning. I shall never forget the horror of feeling the short stump as it passed over me," he continued with a shudder. "After repeating this several times, he slowly turned away: as he disappeared behind the curtains, I regained the power of my limbs and started from my bed, but no trace of my nocturnal visiter was to be seen. All in my portmanteau was as I had left it, excepting that I fancied the paper in which the finger was wrapped appeared more creased than when I had last seen it."

"And do you, Mitford," said Mr. Bertie gravely, "expect us to take a mere ordinary dream for a supernatural occurrence?"

"It was no dream," returned the other; "I was as much awake as I am at the present moment; but we shall see if he pays me a second visit."

"Why surely," said Emily, "you have not got the horrid finger still in your possession?"

"Do you mean to say that we are travelling about with it?" cried her aunt. "I will not go a step farther till it is thrown away."

"If Mitford wishes to avoid any future intercourse with its owner," said Mr. Bertie, "he should leave the relic here, with a sum of money sufficient to insure it Christian burial, and a few masses afterwards. And now let us go to bed, for I hope that early to-morrow we shall be able to start on our journey."

The following morning the fall of snow had ceased, and the pinnacles of the glaciers sparkled like diamonds in the bright sun as the travellers prepared to quit their kind hosts.

"Surely, William," said Miss Bertie to her brother, as she saw the mules enter the court-yard, "you do not mean me to mount one of those disagreeable animals again?"

"Just as you please, Sarah," he replied: "you can stay here with the monks if you choose, but we must get on as well as we can."

"Do not mention monks," she replied — "I dreamed all night of the story Mitford told us."

"I observe that the holy brother has been with you," returned Mr. Bertie; "for in stroking your face he has left a red mark over one eye, or perhaps your toilet has been rather hastily finished. But what ails you, Mitford?" he continued: "you could not look more solemn if the monk had visited you."

"He has actually done so," was the reply; "and what is still more strange, is, that it was exactly yesterday month since I first saw him at Bonn."

"At that rate you may expect just twelve visits a year," said Mr.

Bertie, shrugging his shoulders. "But as you do not seem to wish for his company any more, suppose you give me the finger; I am really curious to know whether your phantom will have the assurance to appear to a man of plain common sense."

"I have a great mind to comply with your request," returned the other, "and I would cheerfully give a hundred pounds if he would pay you a visit. But you must first promise me not to destroy it, for if he continues troublesome I shall certainly return him his property."

The promise was given, and before starting Mitford delivered the finger to Mr. Bertie. On leaving the convent, they were accompanied by the Swiss who has been already mentioned. The mildness of his manners, added to his apparent ill-health and continued melancholy, made him an object of great interest to our travellers, and at parting they exacted a promise that during the ensuing spring he would visit them in England. After a short tour in the north of Italy, Mr. Bertie resolved to return home, and he willingly accepted an offer from a friend whom he had met at Leghorn to return in his yacht. The weather at starting was beautiful, and the first two days were passed in the enjoyment of the sea breezes; but on the third the wind changed, it soon after blew a smart gale, and the two ladies, finding themselves indisposed, retired early to rest. Mr. Bertie and his future son-in-law shared the same cabin. The former, uneasy on his daughter's account, and regretting that he had not returned by land, was unable to sleep, and it was not till near midnight that he fell into a doze, from which he was roused by some one shaking him violently. By the light of a lamp that was suspended from the ceiling he saw Mitford standing by his hammock.

"What is the matter?" he exclaimed, starting up.

"The monk! Did you not see the monk?" was the answer: "he was here a moment ago searching your box for his finger."

The tone of Mitford's voice expressed so much agony, that Mr. Bertie felt it necessary to soothe him.

"Be calm, my dear fellow," said he—"this is some trick of your imagination——"

"It is no trick of my imagination," interrupted the other, who had been trying to collect his thoughts: "it was on this very day two months ago that I paid that unlucky visit to the convent near Bonn. I had hoped that when the finger was out of my possession this persecution would have ended. How unfortunate that we should sleep in the same cabin."

"Well, I will not dispute with you to-night," said Mr. Bertie, seeing him so much in earnest: "thank God the wind seems less violent, and I hope to-morrow will find us once more in port."

Soon after their arrival in England Mitford and Emily were married; and in the society of his young wife every painful impression was obliterated, even the monk and his nocturnal visits were forgotten. The honey-moon was drawing to a close when they returned to Mr. Bertie's house; Emily was in high spirits at seeing her father again, and the evening passed cheerfully away.

On retiring to bed, Mitford found himself feverish and restless, and vainly endeavoured to compose himself to sleep. More than once he sunk into an uneasy doze, from which he was startled by fancying that he heard his name called. His breathing became quick, his breast heaved, and large drops of sweat stood on his brow. At length he sprang from the bed, his hands clenched and his eyes open, but fixed and without meaning.

"Begone, detested fiend!" he cried—"why do you follow me thus? I have it not——"

His violent exclamations awoke his wife. "Henry, my dearest husband," she said, as in inexpressible terror she threw her arms round him, "what is the matter? Speak to me for Heaven's sake."

His head sunk on her shoulder, and it was some minutes before he could recover himself. "What am I to think of this dreadful delusion, Emily?" said he, as soon as he was able to speak.

"Upon my soul, I am almost ashamed to tell you, that, as plain as I now see you here, I fancied I saw the monk by my bed-side. He stroked my face—I shudder when I but think of the touch of that maimed hand. And going to yonder closet" (Mitford imitated the action he described), "he searched—merciful heaven! What is this?" cried the unhappy man, snatching up a small packet, from which, tearing the envelope, he drew the fatal finger. Completely overpowered, he hid his face in his hands, while Emily, scarcely able to support herself from terror, flew to summon her father.

It would be difficult to describe the surprise and vexation of Mr. Bertie, when apprised of what had happened.

"My dear Mitford," said he, "forgive the foolish trick I have played you. Remembering that this was the day of the month on which the spectre was supposed to pay his visit, I placed the finger in the closet, intending to show you that it was possible to pass a night in its vicinity without being conscious of its presence. But I give you my word it shall happen no more, for I will get rid of it so effectually——"

"You have promised it shall not be destroyed," said Mitford.

"It shall not," was the reply, "but neither shall it remain in a house where you are liable to be disturbed by it."

Although persuaded that the excited imagination of his son-in-law had alone caused the strange scene that had taken place, he could not deny that such a delusion might be productive of serious consequences, and he was meditating on the best means of curing it, when he received a visit from a medical friend. Doctor Howell was by profession a physician, and by taste an antiquarian and collector of curiosities. In this latter capacity, the simplicity of his character laid him so open to imposition, that it was the great amusement of some of his friends to play tricks on his credulity. Of this his museum afforded proof, for many things of the most ordinary kind were there shown off as objects of great antiquity or value. Having been lately apprised of Mr. Bertie's return, he came with an invitation for him to be present at the opening of an Egyptian mummy he had just received. The word mummy happened to chime in so exactly with

the subject of that gentleman's thoughts at the moment of the doctor's visit, that it suggested to him a plan for getting rid of the obnoxious finger.

"Talking of mummies, doctor," said he, "Mitford has brought you a great curiosity for your collection—it is the finger of a monk, who has been dead for four hundred years."

"Indeed! how very kind of him," said the old gentleman delighted. "But is it only a finger? Could I not get the whole body?"

"The body, my dear doctor! what are you thinking of? This person was quite a saint in his day, and many a devotee would give half his possessions for one of his finger-nails."

"Indeed! And pray what was his name?"

"His name!" returned the other, who not having thought of this difficulty, was rather at a loss—"Oh! his name was Father——, Father Jerome——"

"Jerome of Prague!" interrupted the doctor, with a confused idea of having heard of such a person.

"The very man," said his friend, forgetting in his hurry to get out of the dilemma, that the personage in question, having died a martyr's death by fire, could not have left even a finger behind him.

"It will be one of the most remarkable objects in the museum," said the doctor, preparing to carry off the relic: "pray thank your son-in-law for his kindness in thinking of me."

Months passed tranquilly on, and Mitford, who was looking forward to the time that should make him a father, engaged a cottage at some distance from London. Mr. Bertie remained in town: he had lately been indisposed, and his son-in-law often rode in to see him. One morning, thus equipped for his ride, he entered Emily's room. She expressed herself unwilling that he should leave her, alleging that she felt low and nervous. But Mitford, who had lately purchased a very high-spirited horse, fancied that she was uneasy on his account, and instead of yielding to her fears, he laughed at them till she was ashamed to urge the point farther, and commending her to the care of her aunt, who resided with them, he set off.

He stayed no longer than was necessary to satisfy himself as to the state of Mr. Bertie's health, for Emily's uneasiness had communicated itself to him, and he was anxious to return home as soon as possible. Not far from his own house, a small wooden bridge crossed a narrow stream: he was about to pass it when his horse shied: looking up to see what had frightened him, Mitford perceived a tall man of remarkable appearance waving his hand to him. Whether the signal was meant to hurry or retard his advance, he did not stop to inquire, for to his astonishment he recognised his acquaintance of the previous year, the Swiss whom they had met at the Convent of St. Bernard. A crowd of recollections overwhelmed him at the sight. The death of the Frenchman, the spectacle of his corpse carried through the apartment, the power of foretelling death attributed to this very man, and last, but not least, his own adventure at Bonn, and the delusion resulting from it, that had at one time threatened to unsettle his reason. All these circumstances rushed at once into his mind,

and with them a presentiment that his happiness was menaced with some fatal blow. He spurred his horse to the traveller's side, but before he could address him, the other exclaimed, —

"Ride on! ride on, Henry Mitford, if you wish to see your wife alive!"

Without stopping to learn the meaning of his words, Mitford putting his horse to his utmost speed, never drew rein till he reached his own house. At the door he was met by Miss Bertie.

"Oh! Henry," she exclaimed, "why did you leave home to-day? Emily has been dreadfully frightened, and a premature confinement has taken place. Your child is dead, and, alas! we have little hope of saving the mother." Without waiting to hear more, Mitford flew to his wife's apartment. Her changed and ghastly countenance already showed the near approach of death; but, though sinking fast, she recognised his steps, and stretched out her arms for a last embrace. "Thank Heaven," she exclaimed, "I see you once more, my Henry."

"Emily! dear Emily!" he cried as he clasped her to his breast, "what is the cause of this?"

Unable to speak, she pointed to a letter on a table by the bedside, and as Mitford recognised, lying near it, the monk's finger, he fell senseless to the ground.

The letter was to the following effect : —

"Sir,

"I return the finger you sent me. My reasons for so doing it is unnecessary to mention, as you can be no stranger to them.

"I am, Sir,

"Yours, &c. &c.

"WATKINS HOWELL."

A month later, the burgomaster of Bonn received a note enclosing a donation for the poor of the town, and requesting that the finger might be replaced in the vault by the side of its owner.

THE VIOL OF OUR LADY.

A GATHERING FROM BOHEMIA.

BY THE MOUNTAINEER.

—"Most men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong;
We learn in suffering what we teach in song."

AUTUMN had swept the fields, and painted the foliage with tropical magnificence. In all the villages on the Bohemian frontier this is the season of national jubilee. The festivals of the church, still celebrated with a species of religious devotion, as well as of joyous delight by the dwellers amongst the mountains, are fast approaching. The poorest weaver and day labourer has stinted himself for a good six months, that he may revel in luxury on church-ale day; and the substantial farmer, liberal and profuse, confesses his want of taste, but establishes his generosity, in the superabundance of the good things he provides for guests unlimited. The mountain farmer is one who holds fast to the manners and customs which he has inherited from his forefathers, and is as proud of his rights as the noble of his pedigree. Like his ancestors, of a hundred years ago, he attires himself for the great holyday of the year. The fine shirt, with silver buttons at the wrist, the large flowered velvet waistcoat, embroidered with silver, the small clothes of black cloth, the picturesque velvet cap, all render the wearer less a citizen of the world, as it exists, than the representative of a class and age long since passed away. In his shirt-sleeves, and with a friendly smile, he stands at his own door awaiting the bidden guests, to whom he advances with slow and measured steps as soon as they pass over the greater half of the well-cleared court. A hearty pressure of the hand, and a civil doffing of the cap, constitute the ceremony of reception. With the *manufacturer*, observances become more circumstantial and polite. The church-ale guests acknowledge a higher power in the manufacturer than in the farmer. The many to whom he affords wages and bread are bondmen, if he be cruel; free, happy, and contented labourers, if he be just. The means, and therefore the power, is his, to become a petty and inhuman tyrant; and, where such power is recognised, respect and fear follow as of course. The manufacturer in Europe is the planter of America. His workmen are his slaves, if not in word, still in substance; and instances are not wanting where the owner of the white man has shown himself a severer taskmaster than the scourger of the black. The manufacturer appears at no church fes-

tival in shirt-sleeves. He is already half a townsman, and has attained the elegance of a short smart jacket, if not of a dress-coat, cut, it must be owned, in a style which no *Magazin des Modes* has recognised as yet. It may be called the *Border* style, in a state of transition from the very old fashion to the extreme modern.

At the borders of Bohemia, physiognomy as well as costume is distinctly marked. Every border people is peculiar; but perhaps nowhere on the globe does so strong a line of demarcation present itself as along the chain of mountains which separate Bohemia from the adjacent lands. The inhabitant, in structure, shape, gait, movement, is unlike every other German. There is something primeval and forest-like about the long-stretched, yet muscular and nervous limbs of the Bohemian. He is a man of the woods, with his strongly defined features, and dark countenance, upon which the Asiatic sun still lies scorching. In a countless crowd of men he shall be discovered by his slouch alone, if even his thoroughly Slavonic face did not betray him, and the black wild hair hanging loosely and sullenly on either side of it.

Art thou, reader, a physiognomist by profession, and dost thou seek instruction in travel? Indulge thyself, and visit the borders at the time of the church festivals. Walk from village to village, and take knowledge from phenomena that force themselves upon you at every step. See, as I have seen, living legendary pictures in bright succession, an Asiatic tint glowing on the surface of European insipidity.

The feasts of the Dedication are the merriest holydays of the lazy Bohemian. Like all Slavonians, he prefers drink, song, and sport, to the irksomeness of labour. He is a free child of the hour, the foe to all restraint, and morosely enduring it, only because it is torture to rattle chains which may not be shaken off. His heart skips with the first clouds of autumn, when the work of the field is over, the fruit gathered, and winter with its idleness not far in the distance. Of the fiddle, he has been, in his way, a perfect master from his youth upwards: this he tunes—then the harp is brought out, and with it the popular dulcimer and tambourine. Musical neighbours are at hand. Happy in spirit, the heart without a care, laden only with song and hope, they one and all descend the mountain, and enter the friendly vales below, where the cleanest villages harbour the most industrious and the best of men.

A bright autumnal morning found me a guest at the church-ale. A recent hoar-frost covered the plains like a silver net, the rustling leaves dropped from the trees, the mountains of Bohemia glistened through misty air. Far and near was heard the smacking of whips with which the shepherd youth are accustomed to serenade their masters—the report of guu-shots,—and the ringing of merry bells, all adding to the excitement of the scene, and leading to that full outbreak of joy, beyond which no happiness is conceived. To neglect church-service on such a day is to be guilty of deliberate blasphemy. The borderer, staunch in matters of faith, hath no milder word for

such omission. Let him who keeps away from church expect no sweet reception at the feast. I had neither wish to lose my holyday, nor objection to assist in prayer. Bowing to custom, I attended the holy service. That over, noon approached, and with it mirth unspeakable. At the stroke of twelve, the church-ale feast began,—and I witnessed a mountain carnival.

Early in the morning, single musicians, and others in concert, were moving over field and mountain, with their faces towards the happy valley. The first comers are not always the most select. These were certainly not. The refuse of life was written on their attire and carriage. They were little better than beggars strumming for existence, and uniting licentiousness to their lively strains. The more respectable musicians did not arrive until the feast was well begun, when they received, like the Greeks in the *Odyssey*, a special seat at the end of the table. Here food was liberally handed to them, and their hearts learnt to rejoice, their lips to grow eloquent, if the glad sounds might be believed with which they delighted the jocund and transported assembly.

Our host was a jovial man,—one who, although a manufacturer, had contrived, with polished manners, to preserve the simple heartiness of the mountain character. He was very shrewd, and yet very gentle: amongst his people, one of themselves, speaking their own dialect, and regarding them as his children. Children generally are not unfilial, and these loved their father. Several of his men were at the table, and it was amusing to hear the giver of the feast, now glibly speaking the hard yet honest idiom of these fellows, then in an instant breaking off to pursue the conversation with more cultivated guests in the purest high German, and with an air and tone that gave another character and appearance even to the speaker.

Young fellows were dancing with servant girls under large lime trees that stood before the house, whilst two harpists played fashionable waltzes to them. We at the table heard the glad tumult in the distance, for as yet no musician had appeared within doors. An hour, however, had scarcely passed before the honour of a visit was announced to us. The music without suddenly ceased—the dancers ran at the top of their speed to the house, burst open the door, and entered breathlessly. Amidst shouting and clapping of hands, I could only gather the words,—“*A viol of our Lady!*”—“*A viol of our Lady!*”

The name of the instrument is possibly known to none of my readers, as the instrument itself is known only to Bohemia and its immediate vicinity. The expression is thoroughly one of the border. The *viol of our Lady* is formed of one singularly strong string, stretched over a sounding-board, resembling a harp, and about five feet long. It is played upon by means of a bow similar to that of a bass viol, and the scale is determined by an exceedingly delicate and skilful pressure of the string on the part of the forefinger and thumb.

Difficult as this uniform instrument is to play, its effect is wonderful and enchanting when the performer handles it with dexterity. The neck of the instrument measures at the most six inches, and therefore

the finer playing depends entirely upon the softer or more vehement touching of the string. A practised player upon *the viol of our Lady* is able in this narrow space for the development of melody to educe the sounds of the most diverse instruments.

I had often already heard this national instrument played upon with moderate skill ; the other guests were well acquainted with it and fond of it. The master of the house bade the children admit the performer, and he hardly did so, before the latter, his instrument on his arm, entered the apartment with a profound obeisance.

He was a tall Bohemian, neatly but nationally dressed. Dark, closely-fitting breeches, a short brown coat, a thin leathern cap with a round cover, and boots, reaching half way up the calf, formed his simple attire. Deep sadness was stamped upon his dusky visage. In his black eye glowed yet the ardent fire of a disappointed passion. His elegantly-shaped hand, brown as it was, might have served for a model.

He accepted in silence the seat that was offered him, and smiled his acknowledgments for the food that was placed in abundance before him. There was something, as I thought, of irony in the smile, and his whole bearing seemed rather that of a proud man conferring a favour, than that of a humble performer receiving one.

"Oh, a pretty waltz! a pretty waltz!" said all the maidens at once in a voice of entreaty—"a waltz must sound so strangely upon the *viol of our Lady*."

The Bohemian nodded his head in acquiescence, and resting his instrument obliquely on the ground, he himself leaned against the wall, and played as he was bid. What ravishing strains! The guests forgot their eating and drinking, wine glasses were held in the hand as if transfixed—a spell seemed to issue from the solitary string of the viol, and to take irresistible possession of the listeners.

The Bohemian finished, and listlessly tuned the string.

"Where have you learnt such playing?" inquired the master. "Who taught you to make spirits run up and down that single string of yours?"

A bitter pang was visible about the finely-formed mouth of the player. An easy bow expressed his gratitude for approbation, and he answered quietly—"I have practised long."

The girls were overawed by the performance. They seated themselves at the table, and did not utter another syllable. The musician took his wine-glass, full to the brim, and as he carried it to his mouth exclaimed—"To woman's happiness!" He emptied his glass in a draught, suffered it, as if suddenly inspired, to fall upon the ground, where it broke into a hundred pieces, and then began immediately to play an overture upon the single string of his instrument.

Some minutes elapsed before we could satisfy ourselves of the truth of that which we saw and heard. It was not *one* instrument revelling in sensual intoxication, but *all* instruments. There was lamentation and sobbing expressed by violins—the violoncello moaned—the bass roared angrily, and amongst them all, like the thunder of the rebuking god, swept crashing the riotous fanfaron of loud trumpets. A

spiritual dread crept like icy frost through the blood of the mirthful assembly — a sound of awful warning seemed to weigh upon their ears ; — a stillness more awful than that of death itself oppressed them, as the last terrible notes came forth, and then died gradually away on the shivering window panes.

The Bohemian, the only unaffected person in the room, quietly rested his magical instrument against the wall. He drank a second glass to the health of the host and his worthy guests, and then, less as it appeared from need than to satisfy custom, he did justice to the food that was given to him.

"My good man ! my good man !" exclaimed the father of the feast, with the perspiration pouring down his face, "you should be heard, indeed you should ! Travel ! travel ! Visit all the cities of Europe. You'll make your fortune. It will be atrocious if talent like yours buries itself at fairs and wakes. You must go into the world, get a name, and laurels, and wealth to your heart's content !"

"I come *from* the world !" said the Bohemian, in answer to the excited manufacturer ; "and I have not always played to barren ears. Heaven knows I have not !" He stopped, as if his utterance were choked, but he soon proceeded, and with assumed tranquillity. "You have heard my music — men hear, but seldom understand. You have heard the anguish of a soul, the experiences of a life. I play no tunes, no chords ; I play years of existence broken upon the rack !"

The guests quitted their seats, and the girls, as if to shake off the gloomy effect of the music, hurried from the room. The eyes of the Bohemian burned like glowing coal in their cells, and he pressed his lips ardently upon the string of his wondrous viol. Some of the older men, and amongst them were the manufacturer and myself, lingered near the strange performer. One ventured to express a wish to hear something more of his sad history. The player did not answer, but, when the wish was repeated and urged, he held his hand to his forehead, as though he would stifle tormenting recollections. He stood up at length, and spoke. "I thank you for your sympathy," said he. "It makes me frank against my will. Listen to my history, and do not take advantage of my confidence." His hand was pressed upon the instant to give him assurance, and he himself was shortly the centre of a narrow circle of most greedy listeners. The young man, without hesitation, spoke as follows : —

"The circumstances under which I was born promised me a happier life than that I now enjoy. As a boy I wanted nothing : my every wish was gratified, sooner than I could make it known. I possessed abundantly all that custom and prejudice account the highest blessings of the world. My parents were Bohemian nobles of an old family well spoken of in the history of my father-land. One of our possessions lay in the flourishing valley of Moldavia, not far from the capital ; and this we generally visited in summer, choosing for the winter our remaining residence. This, as it may be called, twofold enjoyment of existence allied me in early youth both to nature and art, and I learnt to love both with equal enthusiasm. The winter glories of Prague stirred up in me the desire to unite all the splendour

of high civilisation in the most intimate manner with the enchantment of nature. Art should lend her most dazzling charms to the embellishment of life, but never lift herself above the sweet simplicity in which her divinity consists.

"With my years this disposition to adorn my future with dreamy fancies increased in strength; but I soon felt that the realisation of my pure and ardent aspirations could only be attained with the most costly sacrifices. The advance of years created new wants. New emotions grew alive within me, and with these the pains and sorrows incident to existence. I stepped into the world of pleasure and of splendour. In the saloons of the great and rich I encountered the blaze of beauty, before which the heart and soul of man lie prostrate. Music and dance spread their seductive garlands around the inexperience of my youth, and, gladsome and bold, I gave myself up with delight to the ravishing enchantment of sweet sounds.

"The love of music had until now slumbered unnoticed within me. It awoke in an instant, and became dominant, swelling into enthusiasm like the early longings of my boyhood. I grew a fanatic for music, as I had been a fanatic for nature. Passion, however, was not left unassisted. Talent associated itself with love, and I soon became a skilful player, and heard myself commended, where commendation was no mean flattery.

"When the season during which I had made my new acquisition approached its close, and preparations were made to change the abode in the capital for the mild enjoyment of a country life, I felt that the alteration of residence was a blow at once to my happiness. I entreated my parents to leave me in the metropolis, and my supplications were not unavailing. I was placed under the care of some distant relatives, and time was afforded me for the following up of studies that were most dear to me. Life in Prague is sustained as much by the gaiety of my countrymen, whose nourishment is music, as by the influx of foreigners constantly sojourning in the city in the prosecution of their travels. Besides, there are glorious recollections to invigorate the heart: every street reads a public lesson on the past history of the world, which sleeps with sealed eyes in the palaces and castles of the ancient city. Not that I had leisure to take advantage of such lore, or cared to do more than enjoy the sweet delights and giddy pleasure which winter set before me. These were my only occupation until a new source of happiness arose, rendering me insensible to every passion but the all-absorbing one of love—human love—love for a creature unparalleled amongst the angels of the earth.

"Diana, a maiden who had seen scarcely sixteen summers, was adorned with all the sweetness of virginal simplicity, and endowed with every lofty quality. She it was who drew me with invisible force into the circle of her guileless sorcery. The same views and dispositions brought us together. An acquaintance of a month found us more devoted than the dearest friends; and long before the winter's frost yielded to the melting touch of spring, we lived and breathed but in each other's sight.

"Children dream not of the consuming lightning. We could not anticipate the misery which was to follow from our blissful meeting. The parents of Diana were the antitheses of their child. She was all life, gentleness, and *naïveté*; her spirits fresh and young; her maiden soul overflowing with natural coquetry, always charming and attractive, if it be not the work of consciousness, but the heart's simple, genuine development. Her parents, on the other hand, gazed at the world's amusements like dreaming sphynxes. Knitted discontent frowned upon their melancholy countenances; no blissful enjoyment of life laughed humanly in their eyes; no fearless thoughts of liberty. The daughter could not smile, her heart must shed no joyful glance upon the world, if the gloomy pair stood by, over whose convent cheeks a cloud of bigotry for ever rested. What could we do but build a world of bliss formed of trembling kisses, in deep and silent secrecy—what else, if a deadly storm should not break upon our heads and crush us?

"The more secretly we nourished our sweet passion, the warmer it became, the firmer it grew. With the necessity of suppression, ardour was fed, and daring found courage in the very precaution which our fate compelled us to adopt. The ascetic ceremonies to which the parents of Diana daily sacrificed a portion of their scanty happiness gave us but a few minutes for sight and speech. Bigotry is as jealous as love. That worships the mould of worn-out institutions, and the anger of a God feared, but hardly loved: this adores the goodly earth and the sweet humanities of life, and the joys attached to it, that flow from the bountiful hand of a loving and just Creator. Bigotry is impatient as a rival of Love's happiness, and it will kill Love if it be not forced itself to succumb to a foe as full of daring as of vital energy.

"It is to this hour unknown to me whether or not Diana's parents had any inkling of our attachment. It matters not. The result is all the same. Diana, subtle as woman is though innocent as childhood, contrived a method of securing our unmolested happiness. The garden of Wallenstein's palace adjoined the house in which she lived. The two possessions were separated by one high wall. Diana begged for a sleeping apartment that looked upon the garden and its beaming palace, and the parents yielded to what they deemed a girlish, fond caprice. I received an intimation of her success; and scarcely had evening poured her golden flood into the fruitful valley of Moldavia, when I slipped through the palace gates, and hid myself in one of the ingenious grottoes which ornament that princely garden. Night came on—I flew to the end of the garden—a signal notified my presence—a rope ladder quickly dropped—a light step hardly weighed it down:—in another instant my beloved Diana was trembling in her lover's arms.

"The moon alone was witness of our transport, the quiet whispering elder only shared in our discourse. The chilling dews had spread in silvery pearls along the earth, and light had risen in the east ere I conducted the devoted girl back to her imprisonment. Summer and autumn—call them a day—an hour—a moment of unutterable

heavenly bliss—passed on, and I rioted in my delight, unnoticed, undisturbed. It was agreed at length, that, at the expiration of approaching winter, I should petition for her hand. There existed no good ground for a refusal, and yet we feared and felt that it must come. There was no promise of approval in the mien and conduct of those she called her parents. The winter came, and life in Prague was as before. Pleasure betook herself again to the saloons, and cordiality and social intercourse grew stronger within the narrow circle of a city life. The parents of Diana did not share in the general recreation. They were more silent, reserved, and misanthropical than ever. They avoided the meetings of men, and tried as much as possible to restrain their daughter from the pleasures to which custom and her station fitted her. Diana yielded by degrees to her sense of filial duty, and deserted, one after another, the halls of which she was the brightest ornament. I missed her in the world, and sorrow began to mix its bitterness into our cup of real felicity. I determined to postpone no longer my application to her parents: come what may, I would demand her of them, and if refused, set them at defiance. A grand entertainment, given by one of our richest counts, at the close of winter, was about to assemble the nobility of Prague. I was invited, and so were the parents of Diana. At this festival I proposed to acquaint Diana with my resolution. The company was more brilliant than ever: all that grace and beauty could offer to shed a fairy lustre in the gorgeous palace was congregated there: Diana alone was absent. I left the house, frantic with disappointment. I passed a heavy miserable night, and early in the morning presented myself at her father's house: there every thing was as silent as death. A servant, the only one living being in the place, notified to me that his master and mistress had quitted Prague some days before, and in all probability would never return to it again. Their daughter had accompanied them. Diana had been betrothed to Heaven at her birth, and in a few weeks would enter upon her noviciate.

“If any one at this moment had announced to me the destruction of the world, and if the proofs had glared before me in the firmament, my soul could not have quivered as it did when I received this dread intelligence. I acquired with difficulty the name of the place to which Diana's parents had provisionally withdrawn, carrying with them the sweet sacrifice of their inhuman bigotry, and in an hour I was following with the fleetest horses in their track. Trouble and endurance, under which I had almost sunk, were painfully undergone before I was able to approach them. I first discovered traces of them on the Styrian borders, and overtook them at length in one of the remotest villages of the Alps. My prayers for one interview with Diana were fruitless. The religion which man hath invented for himself has nothing to do with the human heart: with desires and lusts it crucifies also lifewarm FEELING—the commandment of Deity written in the inmost soul of man, which to disobey is—*death*. To such religion reconciliation is destruction, and real life can be perceived only in the ashes of decay. It covers the soul with dust, with the faded husks of the grave, that the coward trembler may quit the earth

more quietly in death. To chase away the torment that *will* arise from the stifling of the holiest desires, it pitilessly strangles every joy; it maintains an universal massacre of delight, lest by accident one may escape to which a poor precarious heavenly bliss is haply knitted.

"After a long negotiation, the father of Diana granted me a conference, the result of which was the signing of my earthly misery. I gathered from him that a holy indissoluble vow obliged his wife and himself to dedicate their only child to the blessed Virgin and the church. 'She must remain untainted by the poisonous breath of temporal enjoyments. A pious soul withdraws itself willingly and cheerfully from the glare and glitter of the world, and finds its consolation in the ejaculation of prayer and in fixing its gaze towards heaven. Who would be happy must suffer upon earth. Tears build up the heavenly temple in a better world; and nothing is more salutary for the young and lovely than to dedicate to the Holy Virgin, youth, beauty, and all that follow in their train.'

"I thought my heart would have burst with grief and rage at this consoling speech of a cold, half-dead, half-living creature. I hated the Virgin Mary in my innermost heart: it was she who had made me wretched for life, and misery is quick to detect the faults and weaknesses of man and saints. If sin renders us wise, misfortune makes us acute. Could one bitter heart-rending calamity afflict the universal earth, the very hour of its suffering should be the dawn of its future happiness. Bigotry should disappear—old superstition die, and in its stead reign a religion of joy, of life, of everlasting love—not the creed upon whose altars human hearts are offered up after they have been slowly killed in grief, and pain, and agony.

"Full of resentment, sick in body and soul, with a lacerated and thickly-beating heart, I quitted the religious executioner of his own child. I never gazed upon Diana more, but I heard her voice; I listened in misery to the love-pangs which she poured forth in song, melting the hardness of her cruel cloister walls. I heard the notes with which in her narrow cell she struggled to recall the early heaven of her youth; but music and song fell upon ears unused to sympathy, and he who could have shared her pain, monsters had driven from her sight.

"After a short interval the meek Diana was invested. I was present in an adjoining chapel whilst this horrible funeral was taking place—this burial of a bridal heart throbbing with human impulses in a life-warm virgin frame. The ceremony over, I plunged into a neighbouring forest, and wandered amongst the mountains that compassionately protect the quiet valleys from the poison and tumult of the external world. After I had exhausted my strength in fruitless violence, I returned instinctively to the convent gate. Every Sunday and feast day I heard the voice of my Diana above all other voices: the grated cell was merciful, and vouchsafed me this. At evening, too, the tremulous vibration of a string announced to me the touch of my poor lost girl, which I would have distinguished

amongst a thousand. Who could play upon the harp so well as she? Who had grown so familiar with her skill as I? But she played not now upon the harp. The discipline of the convent allowed the nuns, if they would express their piety in lofty strains, the assistance of one instrument alone — *the viol of our Lady*. And why? Because it was all but impossible to draw from the thick and heavy string the joyful tones that might remind the prisoner of God's fair creation. Oh, Sanctity is despotic! The privileges of piety must be dearly purchased. Bigotry is indeed a small and coward tyrant, if it must needs banish from its house that mildest genius of the world — sweet music; — soft lulling nurse of trouble and of anguish! if it denies for ever entrance to the innocence of nature, and the purest human emotion, and opens its damp gates to instruments which spite and vexation at the gladsomeness of life first conceived and executed. Such an instrument is this, deemed unfit for earth, and yet invented for heaven! An abbot, full of misanthropy and bitter hatred in his gloomiest hours of convent sloth, was surely its creator.

“In early life I had in many ways been brought in contact with the humblest classes of the people. From a child I had always found pleasure in an intercourse with the artless and honest workmen of the world. I had mixed in their pastimes and felt sympathy for their trials. As a boy, the merry dancers were my chief delight; the men who are the last to throw off the national colours, although time and the grasping efforts of civilisation try hard to deface them. The violin, as you know, is never absent from the festival. At times too, but very seldom, the *viol of our Lady* was exhibited and played, and here I first became acquainted with it. By what accident this singular instrument had escaped from the convent and established a home with the people, I cannot tell. I can never forget the impression made upon my youthful mind when I first heard its deep bass note, joined to that high flute-like melting sound, which gives to the viol in any hand the efficacy of at least two instruments. As I grew up, my position and education drew me further and further away from the ranks of the people. I passed into the great world, and the remembrance of youth disappeared with its joys. I scarcely heard the name of the viol pronounced, and never saw it. The voice of complaint, the beloved voice whose sorrow issued from the iron bars, and the tones of the string that accompanied it, first recalled those happier days to my recollection. In an instant I called to mind all that I had heard of this strange instrument. I had been told that the base fear of ecclesiastical ascetism, lest joyful music might admit into the grave of the condemned delight and love of life, had alone vouchsafed this niggard pleasure, and I gnashed my teeth with indignation until I roused myself to fury, and suffered a demoniacal madness to take possession of me: a hellish desire to overthrow the malignity of bigotry in its own creation burned within me. My consuming soul mounted to the narrow cell in which my Diana wept, and fed itself upon the thoughts of its revenge. Since every means of conveying to Diana an assurance of my constancy was taken from me, since I exerted myself in vain to hazard the attempt of a meet-

ing, which, had it been accomplished, could still have led only to eternal separation, I resolved to make my vicinity known to her, and to translate my heart's long suffering by means of the very instrument which pious force had placed in my poor child's hands. My strains however should have nothing in common with those poured forth within the prison-walls. My song should be bright as the sky above me, melting as love, passionate as desire. It should penetrate to the very core of the human heart, and bring to the banished visions of a world that should sicken them with longings for return. The resolution filled me with ecstasy. I would not delay my revenge a single hour. I procured a *viol of our Lady* on the instant. Call it insanity, fiendish convulsion, satanic hate, or whatever else you please—enough the necessity was strong within me, and I was forced to follow it, as though dragged on by a resistless power. I had but one aspiration, and that was by sensual music to annihilate the unholy end which the instrument devised. I would parody the Psalm, new-cast it in a voluptuous love-ditty. The *Salve Maria* under my burning fingers should dissolve into the tremulous strains of maidenly surrendering. Love and revenge now rendered me capable of any act, and led me to the commission of a blasphemy, for which, Heaven knows, I had originally no disposition or bias.

"I practised upon the instrument with unceasing ardour. Perseverance, and the demoniacal energy of revenge, were soon able to overcome all difficulties. The string was animated with a fiery soul. It murmured, complained, exulted, in correspondence with my own tempestuously excited nature. The moment that my finger touched the string, the *viol of our Lady* discovered my thoughts almost without my will. I became a performer not so much from love, as from grief, rage, revenge, and impiety. Thus prepared, I crept every night to the immediate neighbourhood of the convent, where a group of trees protected me from the prying eyes of passengers. I waited for the last horary prayers, gave to memory the impress of melody, and as soon as I saw in Diana's cell the dull light glimmering, which to my agitated soul seemed to kindle the sorrow of a broken heart, I began fiendishly to parody the prayers which I had heard, and to convert devotion into a sensually-intoxicated Bacchanalian.

"Diana, in the gloom of her prison, divined the name of the offender. She attempted a reply to the unhallowed notes; but her oppressed spirit could not provoke touches bold enough to express her grief. The *viol of our Lady* remained a sacred instrument in the hands of Diana. Continual practice perfected my skill. I sounded more daring notes; I invented the most hideous mockeries; not a night passed upon which I did not suffer the wildest harmony to escape from the viol, and to revel in a hundred seductive images around the cells of those luckless brides of Heaven. The sport was bitter, making me feel my own misery the more acutely, and yet my pleasure in it increased with my success. I began to preach at length the insurrection of imprisoned sense. I played a licentious strain, which I called an Introduction to the rebellion of the passions—to a new *Iconoclastes*. From my instrument thundered a frantic creature's cry of vengeance

against a too-presumptuous Heaven. Had notes been words, with these words I would have shattered the prejudices of centuries, overthrown kingdoms, assailed the Holy of holies, and profaned the very judgment-seat of Heaven. The *viol of our Lady* should have become a war-trumpet, summoning the world to battle against the deceptions of the church, the folly of dogmas, the frenzy of bigotry, the jesuitism of virtue. The child had revolted from his dissembling parent, and longed to exercise martial law upon the crimes of centuries.

"My infatuated work could not long remain unobserved. Inquiries were set on foot by the superior of the convent; I was discovered, incarcerated, and then delivered up to the spiritual authorities. It was urged against me, that Diana had lost her reason in consequence of my crime. My sinful strains had infected the purity of her young soul, which, indeed, had wrestled like a bride of Heaven; but, tainted with earthly love, had yielded at length to the weakness of nature.

"These reports may have been true or false. I could not tell. Certain it is, my poor Diana fell ill; and in the burning fever of her malady she had fearful visions, from which she never awoke to the reality of life. *She died.* Killed, they said, by me! Merciful Father, let not that thought follow me to the grave, and to yon bright region where we shall meet again. I languished for years in a miserable dungeon; my parents in the meanwhile paid the debt of nature, and at last I was restored to liberty a beggar in the world—and alone.

"My property was confiscated and given to the church, of course. My parents, it was said, had died of grief, and had themselves assigned their wealth to sacred purposes. I was an outcast. The *viol of our Lady* had robbed me of my inheritance, and my peace.

"Months elapsed before I could reconcile myself to my doom. The desire of life and the spirit of youth were still active within me, whilst the loss and death of Diana lay with the weight of a world upon my existence. I wandered restlessly about with a curse upon my life, and the sadness of broken hopes deep in my bosom. And yet I mourned not over my own misfortunes. I was tormented rather by the gloomy thoughts which haunted me respecting my fellow-creatures who had decreed themselves to bigotry, misery, and death.

"Reason by degrees resumed her dominion. In a quiet hour I determined to walk through the world with my calamity hushed in my own breast, and with no companion but this *instrument* of my vengeance as well as of self-torture. I would complete what I had begun, and make my peace with Heaven by directing to good what had hitherto produced nothing but evil.

"I began anew to practise on the viol. I had of late found a satisfaction in the music which I could not call a solace, but which produced in me a similar effect. I held communion with my instrument, and it answered me in accents of love, in the same tender voice as I had listened to in my days of happiness, when Diana gave me on earth both paradise and heaven. With my improved faculty I endeavoured to gain my existence. I felt that my claim must be recognised could I but obtain a hearing. I had forgotten that the worldly handling of

an instrument, originally dedicated to holy objects, is deemed by some a profanation of the Holiest. Forbidden to exercise my skill in public, I was again impoverished, and my only hope of salvation was to mingle once more in friendship with the people amongst whom I had first become acquainted with the source of all my trouble. I reckoned upon appreciation with the free sons of nature, and by their aid I could at least prolong a life which, indeed, I had long hated, yet would not put away whilst I regarded suffering and patience as lofty virtues. I withdrew to the forests, passed from village to village, performed alone, or in the company of itinerants, and found amongst a genuine people the regard which none are slow to pay to art. Thus, my friends, I became a wandering musician. I traffic, without words, with the sobs of my heart, the anguish of my soul. The string is my petitioner when I hunger and thirst; it prays to God for me when the curse is about to cleave my firmly-closed lips. It consoles me, like the eye of my beloved, when despair points its greedy teeth at my existence. Oh, I am happy, very happy, in the possession of my viol. It gives me power—it makes an opening for me in the human breast. It carries melancholy into the hearts of the overjoyous; and wine shall fail to rejoice where the *viol of our Lady* has subdued. If I wander poor and unknown around your villages, my mission is still acknowledged. I teach you what is wanting yet upon the earth. The viol is my interpreter. Gentleness, and charity, and Christian freedom; true love of Heaven and of earth. Oh, rest assured of the fact, and teach your children to lip the words—

“THERE IS NO CHASTITY WITHOUT LOVE—NO DEVOTION WITHOUT THE BEATING HEART—NO GOD WITHOUT THE BRIGHTNESS OF CREATION.”

The speaker paused; but in another instant he proceeded—

“You have my history,” said he, in conclusion. “It has disturbed your merriment! The *viol of our Lady* is a serious teacher. She cannot deny her origin. Ere I depart, let it speak my gratitude for your patience and attention.”

The performer took his instrument, and in an exquisite fantasia appeared to lull his agitated feelings. He finished, and the room was hushed as though a corpse lay in the centre of it. A thick veil of sadness was drawn on every visage. The Bohemian rose, and then the guests presented their best gifts to the musician. He accepted them with a smile, threw his instrument over his shoulder, bowed, and departed. He bent his steps towards the next forest.

It was a long time before the company could recover the cheerful tone which had prevailed before the appearance of the luckless musician. A church-ale never took place without a sad remembrance of his playing. As for himself, he was not seen in the neighbourhood again, and I have never been able to bear the sound of the *viol of our Lady* from the hour of his disappearance.

INCIDENTS AND IMPRESSIONS

OF

A DAY'S TRIP TO CALAIS.

BY F. O. WARD.

Musis amicus tristitiam et metus
 Tradam protervis in mare Creticum
 Portare ventis. HORACE.

"Il faut voyager quelquefois, pour rapporter les humeurs des nations étrangères, et pour frotter et fimer notre cervelle contre celle d'autrui. — MONTAIGNE.

loath to leave unsought
 Or that, or any place that harbours Men. COMEDY OF ERRORS.

O YE who are at this moment joyfully roving the windy moors; whipping the shallows of the mountain streams; or yachting in the Channel with a flowing sheet; reflect on the horrors of a metropolitan autumn, and pity your less fortunate fellows. While ye drink the free ocean's taintless breeze, or snuff the nutty woodland odours, they breathe the dilute typhus of the city's drain-infected air: while ye gloriously bronze and freckle beneath unclouded suns they walk, darkling, in deep trenches of brick and mortar; and gradually etiolate in shadowy excavations, till at last they look thoroughly underdone.

"My dear sir," said my physician, dropping my wrist, "this vague fretfulness that you describe creeping in your nerves is the instinctive complaint of Nature against your artificial habits. There is a physical as well as a moral Conscience; and yours is at this moment reproaching you with the foul air that you have for six months breathed, and prompting you to a purer life. Drugs might mitigate these corporal rebukings, as opium dulls the moral sense; but the only cure for your physiological compunction lies in obedience to physiological law; and the physicians that I would recommend you to consult are the Sea, the Air, and the Earth."

"But, my good Sir," said my lawyer, next morning, tapping a parchment, "this business positively requires your presence in town. Fresh air and all that sort of thing is highly beneficial, no doubt, and

exceedingly well in its way; but business, Sir," said the dry little man, taking a huge pinch of snuff, "*business* is the first consideration."

So stood the problem—Physic enforcing the claims of Nature—Law, the equally inexorable demands of Civilisation. Expediency, the untier of knots, stepped in with her usual solution—the middle course.

"A day's run to the Continent," said I, "shall compromise for an impossible month in the moors." So, thrusting some shirts and a razor into my carpet-bag, I proceeded forthwith to London Bridge.

A steamer lay along-side the wharf, on the point of starting for Calais. As my destination was "the Sea, the Air, and the Earth," she answered my purpose to a tittle; and I got on board with the exultation of a schoolboy escaped for a holiday.

The wharf was lined with lounging spectators, whose idle indifference contrasted strongly with the sturdy toiling of the porters, and the anxious haste of the voyagers, pressing on to the various boats. The tall ships, soon to be dispersed to all quarters of the globe, lay rocking gently close beside the great buildings fixed there for centuries. The broad black chimney of the steamer silently vomited its lazy volumes of dense smoke; while the narrow roaring steampipe by its side shot forth a viewless jet, whitening upward to fleecy cloud. Great iron cranes stretched from the warehouses like sinewy arms, each dipping its crooked finger into some teeming hold. As fast as one of them brought out a bale or barrel, it turned on its shoulder joint, bringing its prey to the gaping mouth of the hungry warehouse behind, which instantly swallowed it, and swung out its arm to seize another morsel. Meanwhile the river-steamers went panting by; and innumerable wherries cut the water with their iron-tipped beaks, shaped like inverted ploughshares. And high above the turmoil of the swarming multitude, the white tower of St. Magnus' Church rose calmly full in view, standing on the river's brink, surrounded by ships and warehouses; an image of peace amidst babbling strife; a solemn hint of eternity, to moderate the clash and struggle of mundane passions and interests.

To reach the steamer, I had to traverse a ship discharging a cargo of mustard. Finding that it still wanted ten minutes to the time of departure, I went to watch the process. Six men standing in a semi-circle round the hatchway hauled each a tail of the rope which hoisted the casks to the deck. They were discoursing merrily among themselves; and I begged one of them—an honest-looking, weather-beaten tar—to give me a taste of the fun.

"Why you see, sir," said the man, "Bill Splicer has been a coming one of his artful dodges over Wider Jones as keeps the chandler's shop in Goodman's Rents."

"What dodge?" I asked.

"Well, sir, Bill meets her in the street, and tips her the wink, and, says he, 'I've summut spicey for you, mother,' says he, 'so spread out your apern,' says he, 'and take this here prime lot o' mustard,' says he, 'wot I've had the luck to prig out of a broken barrel aboard the Nancy,'

says he, (cos this here's the Nancy, sir, you see,) and give me a gallon o' beer,' says he, 'and go home and don't say nuffin to nobody, for why should' you?' says he, and she spreads out her ankerchief, and gives him the beer, and he cuts his lucky, and she goes home, and—ho! ho! ho!"——

Here he laughed, and shook his head, and wiped the tears out of his eyes with his cuff.

"Well, and what then?" said I.

"Why, sir, it warnt mustard at all, d'ye see, but shumach (out o' the Leopard down yonder), and Bill was a saying when she come to wash her ankerchief what a bright yaller it would be turned, and when she come to mix her mustard—ho! ho! ho!—how *werry* stiff it would be, and what a good drop o' beer it was, ho! ho! ho!"

"But why did Bill pick out a widow woman to be down upon with such a dodge?" said I.

"Werry true, sir," he replied, resuming his gravity, "and I don't say the contrary;—but then she thought it was stole, sir, you see; so there you have it the 'tother way, which brings all square you understand."

The remark showed a rough, practical sense of poetical justice. "Werry true" admitted the fault of the thief; "all square" concurred with Fate in imposing a fine on the receiver.

"And after all what has Bill done," thought I, returning to the steamer, "but imitate on a small scale the wholesale frauds of our ill-organized commerce; which falsifies and adulterates almost every commodity of life; mixes cheap substitutes with our very bread; and even tampers with the medicines of the sick and dying. Bill's coolness pales before the barefaced audacity which openly sells the powdered rhubarb cheaper than the solid root, though pounding it is an additional item of the cost. And, whether Bill and his comrades would have spared an honest woman or not; Commerce, certainly, in its indiscriminate lust for gold, spares neither honesty, nor industry, nor poverty; but poisons and plunders all alike. And in this mad competition of fraud who gains? Bill passes off sumach as mustard, and in return gets a deleterious narcotic draught as infusion of malt and hops. The grocer sells sloe-leaves as tea, and next minute buys lard for butter—or swallows some noxious substitute instead of wholesome rhubarb. And so the juggling tricks go round; each losing by his neighbour's cunning the penny gained by his own; while for all, without exception, the sum of health and comfort is materially impaired."

As I mused the roar of the steampipe ceased, the wheels began to turn, and the vessel moved sluggishly from the wharf, gradually quickening its speed. With beautiful precision she threaded her way through the mast-thronged pool; now dexterously evading the great, slow, sullen coal-barge; now stopping with backward wheels to let some nimble wherry dart across—as a lion might spare to trample on a mouse. But soon, emerging from the crowded pool, she gained the open river, and put forth all her strength. Then, how the creaming water rushed backward from the roaring paddles! How fearful the doubled velocity seemed, as we whirled past some leviathan hurrying

in the opposite direction! On we dashed. Past Greenwich' stately domes; past trim Blackwall; past Woolwich' steamy flats; at length past muddy Gravesend. And now the flying spray began to leave a fresh saltness on the lip; and the river widened into the estuary; and the receding banks showed through the mass of interambient air, like narrow sepia streaks, with trees and houses standing dimly up—flat shadows painted on the sky. On we went. Past Sheerness and the Medway; past the Reculvers; past cockney Margate; round the North Foreland, to the open sea.

The blue water was perfectly calm; its light ripples danced pleasantly in the sun; no one was ill; every one seemed exhilarated and happy. Only one old lady with a grievous face had established herself behind the leeward paddle-box, with her head conveniently disposed for action; as you take a front place in the pit, and wait for the play to begin. But nothing came of it, though she sat there all the passage with a lugubrious aspect, as if she had made up her mind to misery, and were defrauded of her rightful due.

The assortment of passengers was as miscellaneous as usual. There were several slim young ladies, sitting apart, duly cloaked and veiled, apparently intent upon their novels; though I fancied that the corners of their eyes were not wholly indifferent to outward things. And there were several fat mammas, who, over their newspapers and sandwiches, ceased not from slow rumination. And there was an elderly gentleman, diligently improving his mind by means of a telescope; with which he read the names of distant ships; and counted the number of men in the rigging; and reported this to be a brig, and that a schooner, and the third a barque: all which particulars a pale boy by his side (who reminded me of the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge) seemed eagerly to drink in, and lay to heart. And on the forecastle were half-a-dozen commercial travellers, and *commis voyageurs*; *habitués* of the vessel, to whom all was stale and familiar. One, a fat dozing fellow, told me he had brought a cargo of baskets from Metz, and was returning with west of England bacon to Paris. Another, a lean German Jew, with little keen grey eyes, was on his way to Pesth on the Danube, and gave me a flaming account of the magnificence and luxury of that city; where, according to his statement, you may enjoy all the pleasures of Paris at less than half the cost. His pronunciation gave now and then an amusing ambiguity to his discourse; as for instance, when he declared that his strength had been "rejuiced" by the hydropathic treatment; that the French would never "shoot" the English, &c. (meaning "reduced" and "suit"). A third—the most voluble Frenchman I ever met with—poured out upon me a torrent of auto-biography, having especial reference to his *bonnes fortunes*; the heroines of which ranged upwards from Parisian grisettes to Russian princesses and Italian prima donnas. And then, touched by some occult impulse, he suddenly "changed his pipings" and sang of his sorrows; telling how he had that day undergone fraud and extortion at the hands of perfidious Albion, in the purchase of a gingham umbrella for his own use, and also a small rocking-horse for his nephew. "For my little nephew," said he, "has

a lame foot, and cannot walk, and I thought that the rocking-horse would be exercise for him, and might perhaps do him good."

"Confound the fellow!" said I to myself; "after all that farrago of swaggering fibs, he comes in with a bit of good-feeling at last, and entirely destroys the unity and artistic probability of his character. Shall I never fall in with a thorough good study of heartless vanity—a consistent badness, that will do to put in a book?"

The announcement of dinner diverted my thoughts into a less speculative channel; and I descended into the cabin.

The first thing that struck me was the tremulous motion of every thing on table. The boiled mutton had the palsy; the vinegar cruets kept up a chilly chattering in their frames; one nosegay incessantly nodded—the other, as if in contradiction, incessantly shook its head; the beef shuddered under the carving-knife as if it were hurt; the tall bottles of *vin ordinaire* danced like volatile Frenchmen; only the punchy bottles of English porter stood firm, with characteristic stolidity.

The captain, a tough weather-beaten little man, deeply pitted with the small-pox, took the head of the table, and did the honours with the quaintest politeness imaginable. Perched all day on his paddle-box, and accustomed to the rough handling of the elements, the cabin dinner seemed to comprise for him all the grace and poetry of life. There was something irresistibly comical in the dainty tenderness with which he proposed beef-steaks to the ladies; puckering all his features into smiling wrinkles; and striving to adapt his gruff tones to flute-like accordance with the soft occasion. And that tough, pale, stringy beef—he inquired if it was to your liking with such an infectious relish and hearty good faith—pressing on you by turns more gravy, and more fat, and a racier bit of the brown—that at last I almost believed in the beef myself; and, at any rate, had toughness been toughened fifty-fold, I should have scorned to disturb his joyful conviction, or dishonour his so genial invitation; but, quelling rebellious nature, would have sent up my plate with a smile.

After dinner I ascended to the deck; and, pacing up and down, held a long "consultation" with the Sea and the Air. At last the day began to close in; and, when we were half way across, the sun set.

It was a gorgeous spectacle. Along the sea ran a luminous path, leading the eye to the empurpled horizon. The sun's dilated orb hung like a ball of fire in a narrow, blood-red chasm; the jagged edges of which glowed like the bars of a furnace. The upper vault of heaven was strewn with light fleeces, dipped in delicatest rose. The fire that streamed upon the sea was golden towards the horizon, but the nearer ripples sparkled like rich bronze (an effect occasioned, I think, by the dun reflection of the smoke upon the gold-tinged water). As I gazed and gazed, the pageant slowly faded; the chasm closed over the sunken globe; and the short twilight that succeeded, thickened into cold, grey night.

As the vessel hurried on through the dark, the lamplight from below streamed out at every pore. The small glazed apertures of the deck stared up at you as you passed like bloodshot-eyes. Through

the open hatchway of the engine-room, the furnace projected a fierce red glare obliquely upward on the dark main-sail; and in the illuminated space thus formed, the shadow of the crank and piston rose and fell, like a gigantic skeleton arm working some enormous winch; while the figures of the stokers at their work below crossed and re-crossed the sheet, like the slides of an immense magic lantern.

"Look up," said a voice by my side. Turning to see who spoke, I could discern only a dark streak in the air near me. I obeyed the phantom's instructions, however; and, raising my eyes, saw directly over my head a long coal-black rent in the grey sky—a bottomless abyss horrible to gaze into. Suddenly a shower of red sparks shot into this gulf, followed by a forked tongue of pale leaping flame—which, however, instantly destroyed the illusion; revealing the motion of the smoke, as it flowed heavily from the chimney, and stretched like a palpable black stain across the sky. I turned to thank the gentleman who had spoken, but he was gone.

It grew darker and darker. At last, happening as I paced the deck to look over the side of the vessel, I beheld a sight, the beauty of which no language can express. Torrents of pale silver fire poured backward from the paddles, and spread on the dark sea in luminous sheets, through which, at intervals, intenser lustres shone like white-hot embers. Here and there, soft greenish scintillations floated up and vanished, like bursting bubbles of starlight. Far backward from the vessel stretched a wide white track, in which the crested ripples gleamed like feathers of sunny frost. The nearer waves foamed with keen edges of undulating light, which seemed to creep and curl along the water, like spectral snakes. From the black prow the parted spray sprang up in glittering curves, which broke and fell on either side—now, fine as sifted diamond dust—now, in broad flakes of splendour.

As I stood gazing with fascinated eyes upon these beautiful phenomena, I suddenly became conscious of the presence of another 'dark streak' by my side. He stood near the prow, leaning with his body bent half over the gunwale, in an attitude which looked almost dangerous, and gazing intently upon the sea. He neither spoke nor moved; and for some time, not choosing to disturb his contemplation, I remained equally silent. So we stood musing, side by side, for about a quarter of an hour; till at length I felt the situation growing awkward, and ventured a remark at hazard.

"I believe it is you, sir," said I, "that I have to thank for directing my attention a little while ago to the singular effect of the smoke. It was really a most remarkable illusion; and at first sight the heavens seemed cloven as with a black ravine."

He neither replied nor moved a muscle. I quite liked him for his enthusiasm.

"It is indeed a magnificent spectacle," said I. "How beautiful that rain of silver fire, continually quenched in the dark water—and continually renewed. How beautiful the dusty splendour of yon floating spray, ground by the wheels to 'elemental subtlety.'"—

No reply. I raised my voice a little.

"How beautiful the gleaming trail behind, flecking the distant void

with fitful corruscations. How beautiful the jagged outline of this foaming fretwork, edging the black pall of ocean with a fringe of silver lace. How beautiful the luminous water dripping yonder from the corner of the paddle-box, like little drops of moonlight."

Still no reply.

I was a *little* nettled.

"Perhaps he is a philosopher," thought I; "if so, of course he takes me for a ridiculous fellow — with my fire and fretwork; and, now I look, he is hanging something down to the water — doubtless to catch a little of the phosphorescent spray for examination."

"The cause of these remarkable appearances, sir," said I, approaching my face towards him —

Pshaw! it was the Cathead jutting out in the dark, with the anchor hanging from it!

I turned on my heel in a pet.

"Well, well," thought I next moment, chuckling inwardly, "this is not the first time that silence has been mistaken for sensibility; nor is my friend here," I added, patting the Cathead on the back, "the only Blockhead by a good many that has kept his own counsel and passed for a philosopher."

When we neared the harbour I looked ahead and saw the red light of the pier, glowing like a live coal on the water. The vessel's speed was abated; the lead thrown; and a blue light burned (a signal of enquiry whether there were water enough to enable the boat to cross the bar.) The effect of this pallid fire was curious; making suddenly as bright as day the deck that had an instant before been hidden in pitchy darkness; lighting up with a ghastly hue the faces of the dazzled voyagers: and in particular bringing into fantastic relief the little rocking-horse, which reared in the midst, with wild eyes and expanded nostrils, as if terrified at the unearthly glare.

We were soon alongside the quay among the jabbering douaniers; and, my carpet-bag duly examined, I made my way to the hotel Richelieu.

After breakfast next morning, I walked down to the Great *Place* in the centre of the town, and found the weekly market going on.

Market-day in a French provincial town is like a morning-call paid by Agriculture to Commerce. The country-folks visit the citizens, not merely to barter the fruits of the soil for the produce of human industry, but to interchange pleasant conversation and mutual civilities. As I went up and down; first among the stalls of fruit, and vegetables, and flowers, from the country; then among the townspeople's booths of calico, and crockery, and hardware; I overheard many a cheerful snatch of gossip between the stout bronzed peasant-girl and the fairer and slenderer Calaisienne: the former decked out in her red stuff-skirt, blue stockings, striped jerkin, and bright hood of printed calico, formed by a kerchief folded corner-wise over the head; the latter usually enveloped in a stuff cloak clasped close about the neck, and always bearing her marketing-basket in her hand.

The extreme vivacity — the smiles and eager gesticulations with which these good folks negotiated every bargain; the enthusiasm which they threw into the description of a cauliflower's beauty — or

the sale of a bunch of lettuces; the merry laughter and animated discussions with which the intervals of their dealing were filled up; distinguished the whole proceeding from the phlegmatic trafficking of our English boors; and made it seem more like some fête or flower-show than a mere weekly market.

I was watching a remarkably handsome flower-girl, who stood with glowing cheeks and happy sparkling eyes, arranging her bunches of flowers on a narrow stall,

“————— a Rose
In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil.”

She had let a nosegay fall; and, laughing, was in act to pick it up, —when the apparition of a creature, the most hideous in human form that I ever beheld, diverted my regard.

It was a little old woman, bent nearly double; her face a formless mass of filth-incrusted wrinkles; her eyes two small red holes, with tarnished lead at the bottom; her mouth a blue slit; her covering a heap of loathsome rags. In one hand she carried a basket; the other she stretched forth for alms. Mumbling and jabbering to herself, she moved slowly through the market; renewing at every stall her mute, mechanical appeal; and scarcely ever, I observed, in vain. One gave her a potato; another an onion; others an apple, a lettuce, a carrot: I saw no one give her money. She returned no thanks, but mumbled continually to herself; and whatever she received she threw, as if by instinct, into the basket. The flower-girl gave her a rose-bud, making signs to her to smell it. She did not even look at it; but, still mumbling, dropped it into the basket with the rest.

When she had disappeared in the crowd, I inquired her history of an old potato-woman; and learned that she had lost her reason many years ago, through the ill-usage of her husband, who brought her to beggary, and then deserted her. “She lives all the week,” said the potato-woman, “on what she collects in the market: she begs mostly of us women; and the little we can spare we never refuse; for, as Monsieur will reflect, we know what hunger is, and we may all come to sorrow ourselves.”

As she spoke, I observed near a fruit-stall, at a little distance, two women engaged in a more than usually animated dialogue. One was evidently the keeper of the stall, the other a customer; and the subject of their eager discussion was a large Apple. The stall-keeper, with innumerable nods and shrugs, and rapid vivacious utterance, was explaining something about this Apple, which she turned round and round in one hand, pointing with the other, as if to an inscription on its surface. The customer, whom I judged to be a servant girl, was eagerly putting questions, and from time to time spread her hands in surprise and satisfaction.

Not the graven Apple which engendered feud among the Gods—fruit from whose fatal seeds sprang Troy’s disastrous war; not Atlanta’s Apple; not the Apple which man ate, and fell; not the Apple which Newton saw—and spake eternal words; not one nor all of these illustrious Apples could have dilated, with wider wonder, the damsel’s eager eyes.

I approached and looked at the Apple, which was encircled with this inscription in brown indented letters :—

“JESU MARIA PRIEZ POUR NOUS ET NOS PÉCHÉS.”

Herein lay the mystery; and the fruit-woman's animated explanation divulged how she had done it with a pin when the apple was yet young; how the wounds, healing up, left brown scars; and how the letters and the fruit enlarged together—not without a certain crooking and contortion of the former.

At length the servant girl, hesitating much, and fumbling long in her pocket—her eyes continually fixed upon the Apple—drew forth two sous, and bought it.

While she was reading the inscription round and round, the old madwoman came up, still mumbling hideously; and, stopping opposite the girl, stretched forth her basket for alms.

The lass felt in her pocket, and shook her head.

Still the madwoman mumbled; and still she held forth her basket.

The girl looked at the mad woman; then at the Apple—it was a long look; then at the mad woman again; hesitated; and then, suddenly depositing the fruit in the basket, walked hastily away.

“Catholic or protestant,” thought I with emotion, “the prayer that is written on that Apple will ascend, with all its faults, and not be rejected in Heaven!”

Quitting the market, I entered the Hôtel de Ville, and looked round the state apartment under the guidance of an old woman, who seemed impressed with a deep belief in its grandeur and gorgeousness, though it was in fact but a moderate-sized room, rather tawdrily fitted up. She was describing a great picture of the Siege of Calais with a vivacity which, like her phrases, seemed habitual,—a sort of enthusiasm got by heart; and I was paying great attention—less indeed to her description than to the curious psychological phenomenon of her half real, half routine earnestness; when a grey-headed old man, with a bunch of keys in his hand, came in.

“If Monsieur will take the trouble to ascend the tower,” said he, “I will show him the clock-work and the chimes.”

I followed him up a long narrow spiral staircase; and at length, creeping through a trap-door, found myself in the bowels of a turret clock; over which hung a set of bells, provided with hammers, on which the clock-work acted by wires.

The old man contemplated the mechanism with complacency; then looked at me, evidently to enjoy my astonishment and admiration.

I was about to speak, when a detent flew back, and a whizzing sound took place among the wheels—

“Hush!” cried the old man, pointing eagerly upward; “listen!—the clock is going to strike—in a moment you will hear the chimes—and see them at work!”

The great bell thundered One! and the chimes began to limp through the melody of “La pauvre Jeanne.”

The old man stood, with closed eyes and lifted hand, beating time

with his foot to the measure ; and when it was ended he drew a long breath, and looked at me again.

"Capital!" said I, willing to humour his fancy.

"Ah!" said he, with a sigh, "if Monsieur could have heard them fifty years ago, when I was young! Those were the days of music. Now one of the bells is dumb. But we all grow old."

I had indeed noticed several hideous gaps in the tune, occasioned by the recurring deficiency of a particular note.

"Which is the bell that is dumb?" I inquired.

He pointed it out; and I perceived that the hammer, falling a little on one side, caught on a projecting iron, instead of striking the bell; here lay all the mischief — *hinc illæ lachrymæ*.

Picking up a piece of string, I tied one end of it to the dislocated hammer, and the other to an adjacent beam. Having thus restored the hammer to its right position, I lifted it and let it fall. It struck full and true upon the bell, which yielded a sonorous tone — the first, perhaps, for half a century.

The old man was incredulous of the cure, till the next chime rang out without halt or imperfection; and then he fell into an ecstasy. The tears came into his eyes, and I thought he would have hugged me.

"So they chimed when I was a boy" — cried he; "so they chimed the day that I was married — so they chimed the night that my little Pauline was born —"

The happy recollections seemed to crowd too fast upon him, and to choke his utterance.

"There is no such music!" he exclaimed at last, with a smile on his quivering lip.

I looked with some pride on my handiwork — the bit of string that could thus not only heal the gaps of a disjointed melody, but stretch across the blank chasms of a life-time, and join the scattered music of an old man's memory.

A visit to the cathedral, a walk round the ramparts, and an excursion on the pier, brought me to dinner-time. When it fell dark, I sallied forth to ascend the light-house, which stands on high ground in the centre of the town. A poor woman, living in the basement of the tower, sent her little boy to light me up the spiral staircase: at the top I found a narrow door; and, dismissing my guide, I knocked.

"*Qui vive!*" cried a voice within.

"*Un Anglais,*" I replied.

The door opened, and an old man, erect and vigorous, with grizzled hair, admitted me.

I found myself in a small round chamber; nearly filled with wheel-work, supported on a great wooden stand. The stand was hollow inside, and in the cavity was a narrow bed, immediately under the clank — clank — clank of the heavy pendulum.

"Do you sleep in that noise?" said I.

"I couldn't sleep out of it," he replied. "It's stopping for an instant would wake me from the deepest sleep. *Au reste*, I sleep seldom."

"You have been a soldier?" said I.

"I *am* a soldier, Monsieur."

"You have seen a good deal of service probably?"

He went to the opposite side of the stand, on which were pasted a map of Europe, and a gaudily-coloured print of Napoleon. Holding candle to the map, he set his broad thumb on Lombardy; on Egypt; on Germany; on the Peninsula; on Moscow — where he made a long pause; then, turning to the print, he planted the thumb full on Napoleon's breast; and looked at me with a grim smile.

"You loved him?" said I.

"*Parbleu!*" he cried,—"I would have died for him."

When he withdrew his thumb I observed that that central spot of the print was darkened and worn by its visits—as a shrine by pilgrim knees.

"You like fighting?" I inquired.

"*Au contraire—je le déteste!*" said he with emphasis.

"If he were alive," said I, pointing, "would you follow him to battle?"

"*A l'enfer!*" he exclaimed.

"And why, if you abhor fighting?"

"Because it would be Napoleon!"

"But how came you to care so much for him, if you hate fighting?"

"*Mon dieu!* how do I know. I loved him the first day I saw him."

"When was that?"

"We were drawn up for review. We were conscripts. We did not know the exercise. I was then sixteen. I trembled at the thought of fighting. He rode down the ranks. There was a smile on his face. As he passed he cried, *Courage, mes enfans! soyez braves, et nous vous ferons bons soldats—vous autres aussi!* That moment my heart changed. I felt eager to fight—to conquer. His smile was enough."

"And suppose there were a war between France and England —"

"God forbid!" he interposed.

"But if there were, should you still be eager to fight?"

"*Oh! non — non — non!*" said he, shaking his head vehemently.

"What, not for the glory of France?"

"France has glory enough," said he.

"You a soldier and say so!" I rejoined, willing to try him to the utmost. "Why the very newspaper editors in Paris, many of them, recommend war. They write with the greatest fire. In London there were even clergymen, who met the other day and spoke in favour of war. They spoke with remarkable spirit."

"They have not seen war," said he; "I have. They have no old wounds, aching like mine with the changes of the weather. They have never bivouaced on marshy ground—and lain raging with fever in an African hospital. They have never wiped from their faces the brains of a comrade. They have never heard the shrieks of a burning village. *Croyez-moi, Monsieur*, a soldier who has done his duty can never recommend war!"

There was a pause, during which I fancy his memory was busy with old times; for at intervals he shook his head.

"Never!" repeated the man, with a sigh.

"And if he recommended it?" said I, pointing to the print.

"*C'est différent!*" said the soldier, quickly. And there was the grim smile again!

"*Eh bien!*" said I, "*montons.*"

He pushed up a trap door; and by a ladder climbed into the chamber above; I following.

It was a great lantern, glazed with thick plate glass. A vertical axis, rising in the middle, supported on transverse arms six lamps, with great burnished reflectors; which turned steadily round, completing one revolution (he told me) in every minute and a half.

The reflectors, concentrating the light, shed a misty luminous streak obliquely downward through the air, like a ray from behind a cloud. This ray moved slowly in a vast circle round the town; now searching along the ramparts; now lighting with a mysterious gleam the roofs of distant houses. And still, as it travelled, object after object leapt into sudden relief out of the void — as at a creative touch; relapsing with equal suddenness to blank obscurity. One moment a sentinel was revealed — the next, a red chimney with its curling smoke — then a gleaming window — then a tree. Once in every revolution the quaint white cupola of the town-hall caught the full glare; and hung for a moment in the air, like a hideous distorted skull. But over the distant sea the light peered vainly out, swallowed up in darkness ere it reached the waves; like an eye baffled with infinity. And all the while I heard the great pendulum throbbing under my feet; and the sea, at a distance, lapping on the beach; and the vague murmurs of the town, a hundred feet below me.

Looking down, the streets showed, as bright intersecting lines on a dark mass beneath; a great map drawn with phosphorus. As it grew later the bright lines faded; here and there the map was effaced: at last all was dark. Only the great watchman, towering in the midst, still turned his prying lantern round, with calm unceasing vigilance.

"How many miles off can it be seen?" I inquired.

"Ten leagues, Monsieur. Sometimes more."

"And if one of the lights should chance to go out?"

"*Jamais! Impossible!*" he cried, with a sort of consternation at the bare hypothesis. "*Tenez, Monsieur,*" said he, pointing to the ocean: "yonder, where nothing can be seen, there are ships going by to every part of the world. If, to-night, one of my burners were out, within six months would come a letter — perhaps from India — perhaps from America — perhaps from some place I never heard of, saying, 'Such a night, at such an hour, the light of Calais burned dim.' Ah! Monsieur; sometimes, in the dark nights, in the stormy weather, I look out to sea, and I feel as if the eyes of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out! burn dim! oh! *jamais!*"

He put his short pipe in his mouth and smoked prodigiously.

"With how much dignity," thought I, "can Enthusiasm invest even the meanest occupations; and how constantly the human heart,

under every experiment of life, rises superior to its circumstances! What more monotonous drudgery can be conceived than this poor fellow's existence; pent in a narrow tower; burnishing his mirrors by day; trimming his lamps by night? And yet, as he stands, with excited imagination, in the midnight conflict of the elements; feeling the eyes of the world upon him; holding himself responsible to all nations; his function almost rises into the sublime — dilating to moral grandeur by the force of his own conceptions."

I rose early next morning, intending to start by the first boat to England. While they were preparing breakfast, I strolled through the court-yard of the hotel into the kitchen—a long room forming one side of the quadrangle.

The walls blazed with rows of copper stew-pans, highly burnished; ranging, in nice gradations of size, from comfortable elbow-room for a sheep to broil in, whole; down to the guage you would select to do one fritter. Among these hung here and there vessels and implements of more contorted shape, and apocalyptic meaning; culinary alembics, probably, to distil the finer flavours; "portentous engines and strange gins" applied when deep and obstinate essences are to be tortured forth, for princely degustation. They filled me with respect for the *chef de cuisine*; a meagre, thoughtful man, clad in pure white from head to foot; like to some antique hierarch surpliced for sacrificial rites. He, with daring hand, had set a-going seventeen simultaneous pans; big doubtless with the fate of seventeen separate breakfasts. Among them his vigilant eye wandered up and down, active yet serene; like Goëthe's planet, "without haste, without rest." Some of the pans were simmering tenderly; some frizzled in a louder key; some rumbled under cover; some, lidless, bubbled full in view. Each had its peculiar crises, and doubtful turning-points; its special contingencies of failure and success. Yet all these complicated issues his clear mind kept apart, and severally fore-ruled. I noted with delight the nice discrimination of his artistic touches—so fine, yet so decisive. Into one pan he let fall a single drop from a cruet. Another he stirred with a spoon; frowned; and cast in three sorts of spice. One little one he tasted; and, with a smile, gently laid back the lid.

The morning's supplies of fruit, fish, and vegetables, were set forth on a table hard by. These raw materials of his art he inspected with fastidious eyes, as a painter criticises the setting of his palette. At this table a girl, with a pan of water before her, stood peeling turnips. The dull rinds fell off before the crisp passage of the knife; leaving in her hands pure snowballs; which, as fast as they were done, she set swimming in the clear water.

In a dish near the pan lay a heap of live shrimps; agitating their innumerable legs, and doubling up convulsively their speckled pellucid bodies: and among the shrimps was a little sole, about the bigness of the palm of your hand, which lay on its back and from time to time gave a vehement struggle.

When the girl raised her head I recognised her as my market-acquaintance; the pretty flower-girl who gave the rosebud to the mad-woman.

I wondered to see Flora thus invading Pomona's functions; and enquired how she, a flower-girl, came to be going astray after turnips?

"I am doing my cousin Josephine's work," she replied, laughing. "Josephine is a servant here, and has to work very hard. My work, minding flowers, is easy. So, when Josephine wants a holiday, I come to take her place."

"And the flowers, meanwhile?" said I.

"Oh! they do very well without minding, for one day," she replied.

Just then the *chef* stirred a great bubbling pan of butter, and made it frizzle violently.

At the same moment the little sole happened to have a convulsion, and flung himself half over the edge of the dish. His half-bent posture seemed particularly uncomfortable; so I took him up, and laid him flat on the table.

I was watching the little gasping creature, divided between pity for his misery, and admiration of the delicate pinkish hue that tinged his edges, when the flower-girl, espying it, cried with a laugh—

"*Ah! le petit drôle! v'là une bonne bouche!* May I have it, *Monsieur le chef?*"

The *chef* nodded assent; handed her his scissors; and pointed to the bubbling pan of butter.

The girl took up the little fish; and, with the scissors, coolly cut off its tail; then, while it struggled violently, she clipped the tinted edges all round; and lastly, laying it on the table, she set her finger and thumb on its head and tail, and with a knife made two deep cuts across its spine. She then dropped it, still alive, into the boiling butter.

I stood aghast, gazing at her in horror.

'She groped in the pan with a fork; and in a few moments brought it out on the prongs—crisp, rigid, curved—as its last agony had left it.

She took the little stiff corpse in her hand, and ate it; the pink fins still strewn upon the table.

The girl looked at me, with a smile, after she had munched her prey. Ugh! 'twas a repulsive, stony gaze,—a ghoulish smile; recalling the hideous apparition of the shuddering, mutilated fish.

So might the beautiful sorceress—the "fair girl" that "sang so sweetly to him in the dance" have looked at Faust, when

"A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprang from her mouth!"

So might have leered that other mocking enchantress, who made Pan to tune his lamentable pipe—

"Singing how down the Vale of Menalus
He pursued a maiden, and clasped a reed!"

But, "Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!"—happy, if never awakened from deeper dreams, by ruder disenchantments!

THE STREETS OF PARIS.

IN these days of universal steam-travelling, when time, space, and fatigue are all but annihilated, and when each week witnesses the arrival of hundreds of English in the French capital, it appears almost paradoxical to assert that few Englishmen really see or know Paris. Such, nevertheless, is the case, and in the sense in which we mean it, the majority of Parisians might perhaps be included in the same category. We are perfectly aware that natives of Great Britain do daily go by railway to the coast, thence by steamboat to Boulogne or Havre, whence they proceed to Paris, and abide in the latter place for a greater or less space of time. They become rapidly acquainted with the Boulevards, the Tuileries, and the district adjacent to the street and faubourg St. Honoré; Véry and the Frères Provençaux draw them to the Palais Royal, which, in its present declining state, has little else attractive; the theatre-going doubtless visit the score or more theatres that the play-loving Parisians support — a slight contrast, by the by, to the often empty benches of our own similar establishments. Nay, we have been assured that a considerable proportion of the aforesaid English do actually go through the laborious operation of visiting the picture-galleries, parades of troops, public exhibitions and sights of all kinds, of which *Galignani's* newspaper each morning presents them with a list, of a length that would induce one to believe the undertaking impracticable in any day not consisting of more than the usual number of hours. But amongst all the sight-seers and curiosity-hunters who, as the French firmly believe, escape from their own foggy shores to eat a well-cooked dinner and enjoy a little sunshine in the pleasant land of France, not one in a thousand sees Paris, in the full extent of the term — Paris ancient as well as modern, Paris the historical, romantic, and legendary, the poetical and picturesque.

We can call to mind no city in Europe which offers so large a field of research and interest to the antiquarian, the historian, and the lover of old traditions and records of times past, as the French metropolis. Without referring to the many extraordinary events of which it has been the centre and often the scene during the last sixty years, we have only to glance through a volume of French history, or to recall such names as Richelieu, Mazarine, Medici, Guise, Maitenon, Sevigné, De Rochefoucauld, and hundreds of others, equally remarkable, who have played their parts upon the stage of Parisian political, social, and literary life, to feel the strongest interest in the associations they have left behind them as connected with the houses and streets of that city. A history of the localities in Paris that have been the scene of remarkable events, the residences of persons illus-

trious by their talents and virtues, or notorious for their crimes and vices, could not fail to be highly interesting. A work of this nature has been recently published, the result of the research and talent of a cyclus of authors, most of them honourably known in the ranks of French literature. Jules Janin, the brilliant critic, Jacob the *Bibliophile*, Messieurs Guinot, Berthet, Etienne Arago, and a crowd of other writers, have contributed to the work, which is illustrated with engravings and vignettes by several clever French artists. The usual inconveniences of literary collaboration have been easily avoided in this instance; each of the authors having selected the street or building, the history of which he was, from taste or the nature of his pursuits, most competent to give. Thus Lacroix, the bibliophilist and antiquarian, contributes a chapter of much interest and research concerning that ancient part of Paris called the Cité, the scene of the earlier portion of Eugène Sue's grotesquely horrible, but yet clever book, the *Mystères de Paris*. Marco de St. Hilaire, an ex-page of Napoleon, and who has published several volumes relating to the public and private life of his former master, gives the history of the Rue de la Paix and Place Vendome, in which, *à propos* of the *Colonne de la Grande Armée* he introduces sundry anecdotes of Buonaparte. Some of the modern streets which, in spite of their want of antiquity, have been deemed worthy of a chapter, have received much piquant interest from the details and characteristic matter introduced by the *feuilletonistes* who have described them. All, in short, seem to have exerted themselves to produce a worthy chronicle of the city which Frenchmen are fond of calling the metropolis of the world. We must in justice admit, that they have been to a considerable extent successful.

After an amusing preface by the editor entitled *À travers les Rues*, the first chapter of the chronicles before us is devoted to the Hôtel de Ville or town hall, and the square that surrounds it, and has been the invariable resort of the multitude on occasions of tumult or insurrection. The present building dates only from the sixteenth century, and large additions having from time to time been made to it, its architecture is irregular, and characteristic of no particular period. Long before its erection, however, the building previously used as *Maison de Ville*, or de la *Prevôté* as it was called, had assumed the character of a popular rendezvous. So far back as 1380, under the reign of Charles the Sixth, two hundred of the most notable citizens of Paris assembled there to frame their remonstrance against the exactions and violence of the king's relatives. The following year the heavy taxes extorted from the Parisians roused them to revolt, and the cry was raised "To the Hotel de Ville!" The doors of the building were burst open, and a quantity of leaden mallets, used at that period as arms, and which had been placed there in store, fell into the power of the populace, who dispersed in all directions, destroying and pillaging whatever they found that in any way appertained to royalty. A small tower at one of the angles of the square still exists, against which, a man clothed in a long black robe, with a hood pulled over his face, struck three furious blows with a mallet,

as a signal of departure and violence to the insurgents. This was the famous revolt of the *Maillotins*.

Three centuries passed away. On the second of July 1682, the people of Paris were again assembled on the square of the *Hôtel de Ville*, discussing the quarrels between the court and the parliament, and the probable result of the battle which the two great captains of the age, Condé and Turenne, were then disputing at the very gates of Paris. The two generals had shown equal skill and valour, and the victory had remained for a long time undecided, but at last the arrival of the Marquis de la Ferté, to reinforce Turenne, was about to turn the scale. The Parisians, who felt their interests and privileges in no way implicated in the struggle, showed on this occasion, as during the whole period of what were called the wars of the *Fronde*, a complete indifference to the result, and unwillingness to take any part in the fray. A woman at last succeeded in conquering this apathy. *Mademoiselle de Montpensier*, by an ardent and energetic harangue, roused the people from its inaction; the gates of Paris were thrown open to Condé and his troops, and the fight spread over the faubourg St. Antoine, while the cannon of the Bastille, directed by *Mademoiselle* herself, thundered against the royal army. By the aid of the populace the glory of the Grand Condé was saved from a blemish. After the battle the Parisians again thronged to the *Hôtel de Ville*, the outside of which was long blackened by the bonfires they lit around it in honour of their victory.

The same square which witnessed these and many other more recent popular tumults, deliberations, and rejoicings, was also for a long time the scene of public executions. It was there that the celebrated poisoner, the Marchioness of Brinvilliers, was decapitated, and her body afterwards burnt, an execution which furnished *Madame de Sevigné* with a text for one of her gayest and most lively letters. Thomas de Mahi, Marquis de Favras, surnamed "The Last of the Marquises," was hung there in 1790. On the strength of an anonymous accusation made by an Italian named Turcatti, he was found guilty of a project of counter-revolution, but died protesting his innocence, and steadfastly refusing to betray the names of his accomplices. The most horrible execution that ever occurred in modern times, or perhaps at any period of the world's history, also took place within the last ninety years, upon this same *Place de Grève*. It was that of Robert Francis Damiens, who attempted to assassinate Louis the Fifteenth, and who was torn asunder by horses after undergoing a series of tortures unparalleled in the annals of civilised nations, and which were witnessed, to their shame be it spoken, by a bejewelled and embroidered assemblage of ladies and courtiers. The details are too horrible to be read or written, and had been better omitted by the chronicler. Notwithstanding their atrocity, however, we are informed that on the evening of the execution a young duchess made herself particularly remarked in the court circle by the grace and exactness with which she related every particular of the horrible scene she had that morning witnessed. The observation of another of these dames, the worthy ornament of the most dissolute and heartless period of

French history, we can scarcely believe to have been made, although we are assured of its authenticity. "*Pauvres bêtes !*" said she, as she saw the horses straining to tear asunder the limbs of the agonised wretch. "*Pauvres bêtes, comme elles se donnent du mal !*"

To turn to more agreeable subjects. As we have already mentioned, our chroniclers have not limited themselves to the description of the more ancient quarters of Paris, neither, although serious enough in many places, do they omit any matter of a light nature likely to entertain their readers, and which they can introduce without departing from their original plan. They pass very agreeably from grave to gay, from lively to severe; from subjects more especially interesting to the historian and the antiquary, to others which will find a ready acceptance at the hands of persons preferring a lighter description of literature. As a specimen of this kind of transition, we will give some extracts from a pleasant chapter written by one of the witty editors of the *Paris Charivari*. The Rue Lepelletier in which the French opera-house is situated, and which dates its existence only from the year 1786, has found an able and amusing historian in M. Albert Cler.

The opera at Paris on its first establishment was given in the large library of the Hôtel de Nevers, then inhabited by Cardinal Mazarine. Thence it was transferred to a hall in the Tuileries, and at last, after having several times changed its quarters, it fixed itself in a magnificent opera-house in the Rue Richelieu, built by Mademoiselle Montansier, the directress of the Versailles theatre, bought by the revolutionary government, and opened on the 15th of July 1794. This lasted six and twenty years, until in 1820 the Duke de Berri was stabbed coming out of this theatre, where he had been to see the ballet of the Carnival of Venice. The government then pulled down the building and erected a monument in its place, which since the revolution of July has in its turn disappeared and been replaced by an open square and a fountain. The opera was removed to the Rue Lepelletier, temporarily, it was said at the time, but after a lapse of three and twenty years the opera-house, meant to be temporary, is still in use. On the other hand a good many things meant to be permanent have disappeared.

The theatre in the Rue Lepelletier was built under the direction of a Monsieur Debray, and has been the object of much criticism, on account of its very ordinary external appearance. When it was first built, if a stranger asked the way to the opera-house, the sarcastic answer used to be "*Rue Lepelletier, second door on the right.*"

The invention of the style of musical drama known as the opera is attributed to two Florentines, the poet Ottavio Rinucci and the Cavaliere Giacomo Corsi, a musician of great talent. Towards the commencement of the sixteenth century these persons got up a lyrical piece entitled the Loves of Apollo and Circe, which was performed with immense success before the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Cardinal Mazarine was the first who introduced the opera into France, but with Italian words, music, and singers. After a time the Abbé Perrin

ventured to write a French libretto. He began by a pastoral in five acts, which was played in 1659 at the Hôtel de Nevers. The music was by Gambert, organist of the church of St. Honoré, and musician to the queen-mother. Ten years later the Abbé Perrin obtained letters patent "permitting him to establish academies of music at Paris, and in other towns of the kingdom, for the purpose of public singing with theatrical representations, as practised in Italy, Germany, and England." The first musicians and singers of the Grand Opera were taken from the cathedral churches, principally from Languedoc. It is odd enough that the opera-house, which has since been so often denounced as a place of profanity and perdition, should have been inaugurated by an abbé and choristers.

From Perrin the privilege was transferred to the celebrated Lully, who, assisted by the poet Quinault, soon brought the opera to a high pitch of splendour and prosperity. The letters of licence given to the new manager by Louis XIV. are curious and characteristic of the times. By them Lully is permitted "to establish in the good city of Paris a royal academy of music, there to perform musical pieces with French or foreign words, *even those which have been performed before ourselves*, forbidding all persons of what quality soever, not excepting the officers of our court, to witness them without paying. And forasmuch as we choose this academy to be upon the footing of those of Italy, where gentlemen do sing publicly without derogation, it pleases us, and we will, that all gentlemen or damoiselles who shall sing in the said pieces and representations of our royal academy, shall do so without thereby losing aught of their nobility and privileges."

Lully, it would appear, was of a most brutal and violent character. On one occasion the first female singer having declared her inability to support a part in an opera of the manager's composition, on account of her being *enceinte*, Lully gave her kick which nearly caused her death. At the rehearsals, if any unlucky denizen of the orchestra brought out a false note or committed a blunder, Lully would rush furiously at him, and commence his reproof by breaking his violin upon the head of the offending musician. After fifteen years' managership this passionate personage died, leaving behind him the enormous sum (for those times) of six hundred and thirty thousand livres. His successors were far from being so fortunate. From 1687 to 1830 not a manager but lost money or became bankrupt by the speculation.

We have already mentioned, that by virtue of an express clause of the charter granted by Louis XIV. to the opera, the gentilhommes and demoiselles who sang there lost nothing of their rank or dignity. What is less generally known, however, is that the actors and actresses at this theatre also enjoy a spiritual immunity, that is to say, an exemption from the excommunication in which all other classes of comedians are included.

The decree of Louis le Grand, that no persons, whatever their rank or station, should enter the opera-house without paying, has gradually become obsolete. A vast number of persons attached to the court, the ministers, the prefect of the Seine, the prefect of police, and a crowd of place-holders of various classes, use or abuse of their official position

to exact a free admission to the theatres royal. Another example of the calculating and economical spirit of the age is to be found in the fact that many wealthy persons who have boxes by the year sell the tickets when they do not make use of them. How would the Richelieus and Lauzuns of times gone by be astonished, if they could rise from their graves, and behold their successors, the beau monde of the nineteenth century, condescending to traffic in opera-boxes. Decidedly our modern aristocracy is too tenacious of its titles of nobility, in other words, of its bank notes and louis d'ors.

The *foyer*, or saloon of the opera, which is much resorted to between the acts by the frequenters of that theatre, is the place where all the gossip and *ondits* of Paris are said to circulate. Certain newspapers are in the habit of devising some particular source from which they profess to get the news they publish. "The best informed circles," and "a certain political drawing-room," having become rather stale, they have taken to introducing as a variety the *foyer de l'opera*, and now a favourite commencement for a leading article is, "Yesterday there was much conversation in the foyer de l'opera concerning ——." In consequence of this many worthy but simple people fancy the foyer de l'opera to be a sort of political forum. When, however, in hopes of overhearing some important secret, they lend an attentive ear to the conversation passing around them, how grievously are they disappointed on hearing such desultory chat as, "Pretty well I thank you; how are you? I did not see Madame Glandureau in her box to-night. It's very cold. Very warm. Duprez in capital voice, &c. &c. The foyer de l'opera is one of the popular errors of the day."

Monsieur Cler gives a copy of a document which is highly curious, as showing the difference that a hundred and thirty years have made in the rate of payment of singers and dancers. It is dated the 11th of January 1713, and headed, "List of the number of persons, both men and women, of which the king (Louis XIV.) wills and enacts that the Royal Academy of Music shall *always* be composed, without any possibility of diminution or increase." The list of actors and actresses, and their rates of payment, follow. The first tenor, bass, and female singer, had each fifteen hundred livres, about sixty pounds, a year. The two first dancers a thousand livres each. Those of less merit and importance were paid in a decreasing proportion. The orchestra consisted of forty-six musicians, paid from four to six hundred livres each. Only two machinists were allowed. From this document it appears, that in 1713 the whole establishment of the opera, including every one employed in any possible way, amounted to one hundred and twenty-six persons, costing altogether 67,050 livres a year, or about two thirds of what is now given to a first-rate singer. In these days of theatrical extravagance, when even second and third-rate comedians consider their carriage and horses, their groom and valet, as amongst the actual necessities of life, such a moderate system of expenditure for the support of an opera is rather startling. What would the Duprez and Rubinis, the Grisis and Elslers have said to it?

Between the streets of St. Denis and St. Martin, in the commercial quarter of Paris, runs a lane consisting of about ninety houses, and known by the name of the Rue Quincampoix, a name derived, it is said, from a Breton family of Klinkuampoix, to which the ground formerly belonged. This dirty and insignificant street, into which, owing to its narrowness and the height of its houses, the sun seldom or never penetrates, is nevertheless remarkable as the scene of operations of the Parisians during one of the most extraordinary fits of madness with which they were ever seized. It was in this street that the prince of impostors and charlatans, John Law, fixed his headquarters during the years 1718 and 1719; and within its narrow limits was the ruin of thousands of families consummated.

John Law, of Lauriston, was a tall and handsome man, remarkably graceful and active; skilled in all sorts of exercises, and a particularly good tennis-player, which game was then much in vogue; a skilful and successful gambler, and a great favourite with the fair sex. A duel, in which he killed his adversary, caused him to be thrown into prison; he made his escape, left England, and went to Paris. There, at the house of a courtesan named La Duclos, he became acquainted with the young Duke of Orleans, with whom he formed an intimacy, the result of which was the extraordinary system which for the time ruined half France. Without giving an account of the nature of the Mississippi speculation, already so well known, we will record a few anecdotes of the time, showing the extraordinary pitch to which the public infatuation was carried. It is the Rue Quincampoix, and not Law's system, of which we are writing the history.

At the time we speak of, the possession of the smallest closet or garret in that privileged street was sought after with the utmost avidity; every apartment was divided and subdivided into little offices, which were rented at exorbitant prices to the speculators. The cellars were perfect labyrinths of rooms; and even on the roofs small wooden houses, scarce bigger than sentry-boxes, had been erected. Each house resembled a bee-hive; the same hum, the same busy bustle, the same swarm of inhabitants. A dwelling, of which the usual rent was six hundred livres, then produced a hundred thousand. But it was in the street itself that the speculators swarmed, and that the greater portion of the business was transacted. The rage of speculation had infected all ranks, ages, and sexes. Jansenists and Molinists, noblemen, women of title, magistrates, swindlers, lacqueys, courtiers, conversed with and elbowed one another without regard to their respective stations. The strangest medley of passions and emotions, — fear, hope, joy, disappointment, and greed of gain were there. The want of room, and of places convenient for writing, was so great, that several persons gained large sums by hiring out their shoulders as desks. A very broad-shouldered grenadier, and a humpbacked man, are particularly mentioned as having made fortunes in that way. A cobbler, whose wooden shed was supported against the garden wall of the banker Tourton, gained two hundred livres a day by letting his bench to the ladies who came to witness this extraordinary scene. All sorts of stratagems were put in practice to produce

a rise and fall in the price of the shares, and the fluctuations were so rapid and enormous, that the brokers who received shares for sale often had time, by keeping them only one day, to make enormous profits. One of these men being charged to sell a certain number disappeared for two days. It was supposed he had absconded; but on the third day he came to pay the value of the shares. Meanwhile, thanks to the variations of the market, he had had time to earn a million of livres for himself. A million a day was no uncommon profit for one person to make: it is not surprising, therefore, that servants became on a sudden as rich as their masters. There was a story told of a valet who was driving in his carriage on a wet day, when, seeing his master on foot, he stopped the coach and offered him a seat.

It was towards the middle of 1718 that the system began to flourish; December 1719 was the period when the infatuation was at its greatest height. The five hundred livre shares had risen to eighteen and twenty thousand livres, or thirty-six to forty times their original price. The Mississippians, as those who had become enriched by the system were called, now began to give themselves up to all kinds of riot and extravagance. The shops in the Rue St. Honoré, filled usually with the richest stuffs, were exhausted of their merchandise; cloth of gold was become exceedingly rare, and might be seen worn in the streets by persons of all classes. Everything had risen in value: a nobleman and a Mississippian were one day disputing a partridge in a shop, and ended by trying to outbid each other. The Mississippian bought it for two hundred livres.

The morals of the people suffered greatly during this period of insanity, for such it may be called. The sudden facility given to all classes to enrich themselves without that degree of exertion or labour which renders men worthy of possessing wealth, and moderate in enjoying it, gave rise to excessive ambition, and to a dangerous taste for luxury. A large proportion of the newly enriched were coarse-minded uneducated people, incapable of refined enjoyments, and given up to sensuality. Luxury and bad taste walked hand in hand through the gaudy saloons of their newly acquired mansions. Their furniture was overloaded with gold, silver, and precious stones; they had barrels full of perfumes, fountains of scented water, gave incredible sums for rare and monstrous fish and fruits from the most distant quarters of the globe, bought extraordinary automaton, and indulged in every respect in the most expensive and dissolute habits.

Such a state of things could not long subsist; the richer among the Mississippians began at last to wish to realise their piles of paper, and then began the decline of the system. It was at this period that a number of debauched young noblemen, who had failed in their speculations, formed a plan for enriching themselves by attacking the speculators in the Rue Quincampoix, sword in hand, and carrying off their portfolios. A crime, however, that was committed before the plot was ripe, prevented the latter from being put into execution.

(To be continued.)

HOOD'S MAGAZINE

AND

Comic Miscellany.

THE LAY OF THE LABOURER.

It was a gloomy evening. The sun had set, angry and threatening, lighting up the horizon with lurid flame and flakes of blood-red — slowly quenched by slants of distant rain, dense and dark as segments of the old deluge. At last the whole sky was black, except the low driving grey scud, amidst which faint streaks of lightning wandered capriciously towards their appointed aim, like young fire-fiends playing on their errands.

"There will be a storm!" whispered Nature herself, as the crisp fallen leaves of autumn started up with a hollow rustle, and began dancing a wild round, with a whirlwind of dust, like some frantic orgy ushering in a revolution.

"There will be a storm!" I echoed, instinctively looking round for the nearest shelter, and making towards it at my best pace. At such times the proudest heads will bow to very low lintels; and setting dignity against a ducking, I very willingly condescended to stoop into "The Plough."

It was a small hedge alehouse, too humble for the refinement of a separate parlour. One large tap-room served for all comers gentle or simple, if gentlefolks, except from stress of weather, ever sought such a place of entertainment. Its scanty accommodations were even meaner than usual: the Plough had suffered from the hardness of the times, and exhibited the bareness of a house recently unfurnished by the broker. The aspect of the public room was cold and cheerless. There was a mere glimmer of fire in the grate, and a single un-snuffed candle stood guttering over the neck of the stone bottle in which it was stuck, in the middle of the plain deal table. The low ceiling, blackened by smoke, hung overhead like a canopy of gloomy clouds; the walls were stained with damp, and patches of the plaster had peeled off from the naked laths. Ornament there was none, ex-

cept a solitary print, gaudily daubed in body-colours, and formerly glazed, as hinted by a small triangle of glass in one corner of the black frame. The subject, "the Shipwrecked Mariner," whose corpse, jacketted in bright sky-blue, rolled on a still brighter strip of yellow shingle, between two grass-green wheat-sheaves with white ears—but intended for foaming billows. Above all, the customary odours were wanting; the faint smell of beer and ale, the strong scent of spirits, the fumes of tobacco; none of them agreeable to a nice sense, but decidedly missed with a feeling akin to disappointment. Rank or vapid, they belonged to the place, representing, though in an infinitely lower key, the bouquet of Burgundy, the aroma of choice liqueurs—the breath of Social Enjoyment.

Yet there was no lack of company. Ten or twelve men, some young, but the majority of the middle age, and one or two advanced in years, were seated at the sordid board. As many glasses and jugs of various patterns stood before them; but mostly empty, as was the tin tankard from which they had been replenished. Only a few of the party in the neighbourhood of a brown earthenware pitcher had full cups; but of the very small ale called Adam's. Their coin and credit exhausted, they were keeping up the forms of drinking and good fellowship with plain water. From the same cause, a bundle of new clay pipes lay idle on the table, unsoiled by the Indian weed.

A glance sufficed to show that the company were of the labouring class—men with tanned, furrowed faces, and hairy freckled hands—who smelt "of the earth, earthy," and were clad in fustian and leather, in velveteen and corduroy, glossy with wear or wet, soiled by brown clay and green moss, scratched and torn by brambles, wrinkled, warped, and threadbare with age, and variously patched—garments for need and decency, not show;—for if, amidst the prevailing russets, drabs, and olives, there was a gayer scrap of green, blue, or red, it was a tribute not to vanity but expediency—some fragment of military broadcloth or livery plush.

As I entered, the whole party turned their eyes upon me, and having satisfied themselves by a brief scrutiny that my face and person were unknown to them, thenceforward took no more notice of me than of their own shadows on the wall. I could have fancied myself invisible, they resumed their conversation with so little reserve. The topics, such as poor men discuss amongst themselves:—the dearth of bread, the shortness of work, the long hours of labour, the lowness of wages, the badness of the weather, the sickliness of the season, the signs of a hard winter, the general evils of want, poverty, and disease; but accompanied by such particular revelations, such minute details, and frank disclosures, as should only have come from persons talking in their sleep! The vulgar indelicacy, methought, with which they gossipped before me of family matters—the brutal callousness with which they exposed their private affairs, the whole history and mystery of bed, board, and hearth, the secrets of home! But a little more listening and reflection converted my disgust into pity and concern. Alas! I had forgotten that the lives of certain classes of our species have been laid almost as bare and open as those

the beasts of the field! The poor men had no domestic secrets—private affairs! All were public—matters of notoriety—friend and foe concurring in the advertisement. The Law had ferretted out their huts, and scheduled their three-legged tables and bottomless purses. Statistical Grocers had taken notes, and printed them, of every hole in their coats. Political reporters had calculated their in-comings and outgoings down to fractions of pence and half ounces of silver; and had supplied the minutiae of their domestic economy for paragraphs and leading articles. Charity, arm in arm with Curiosity, and clerical Philanthropy, linked perhaps with a religious Inquisitor, had taken an inventory of their defects moral and spiritual; whilst medical visitors had inspected and recorded their physical sores, cancers, or scrofulous, their humours, and their tumours.

Society, like a policeman, had turned upon them the full blaze of the public eye—exploring the shadiest recesses of their privacy, till their means, food, habits, and modes of existence were as minutely familiar as those of the animalculæ exhibited in Regent Street by the public microscope. They had no longer any decent appearances to put up—any shabby ones to mask with a better face—any petty details to slur over—any household struggles to conceal. Their circumstances were known intimately, not merely to next-door neighbours, and kith and kin, but to the whole parish, the whole county, the whole country. It was one of their last few privileges to discuss in common with the Parliament, the Press, and the Public, the deplorable details of their own affairs. Their destitution was a naked Great Fact, and they talked of it like proclaimed Bankrupts, as they were, in the wide world's Gazette.

"What matters?" said a grey-headed man, in fustian, in answer to the warning nudge and whisper from his neighbour. "If walls have ears, they are welcome to what they can catch—ay, and the stranger boot—if so be he don't know all about us already—for it's all in the open. What we yarn, and what we spend—what we eat, and what we drink—what we wear, and the cost on it from top to toe—where we sleep, and how many on us lie in a bed—our concerns are as common as waste land."

"And as many geese and donkies turned on to them, I do think!" cried a young fellow in velveteens—"to hear how folk cackle and squabble about our states. And then the queer remedies as is prescribed, one for a starving man! A Bible says one—a Reading made Easy says another—a Temperance Medal says another—or maybe a Haggricultural Prize. But what is he to eat, I ax? Why, says one, a Maccassian Jew—says another, a cricket-ball—says another, a Maypole—and says another, the Venus bound for Horsetrailer."

"As if idle hands and empty pockets," said the grey-headed man, "did not make signs, of themselves, for work and wages—and a hungry belly for bread and cheese."

"That's true, any how," said one of the water-drinkers. "I only wish a doctor could come at this minute, and listen with his *telescope* to my stomach, and he would hear it a-talking as plain as our magpie, I saying, I wants wittles."

There was a general peal of mirth at this speech, but brief and ending abruptly, as laughter does, when extorted by the odd treatment of a serious subject—a flash followed by deeper gloom. The conversation then assumed a graver tone; each man in turn recounting the trials, privations, and visitations, of himself, his wife, and children, or his neighbour's—not mentioned with fierceness, intermingling oaths and threats, nor with bitterness—some few allusions excepted to harsh overseers or miserly masters—but as soldiers or sailors describe the hardships and sufferings they have had to encounter in their rough vocation, and evidently endured in their own persons with a manly fortitude. If the speaker's voice faltered, or his eyes moistened, it was only when he painted the sharp bones showing through the skin, the skin through the rags, of the wife of his bosom; or how the traditional Wolf, no longer to be kept from the door, had rushed in and fastened on his young ones. What a revelation it was! Fathers, with more children than shillings per week—mothers travelling literally in the straw—infants starving before the parents' eyes, with cold, and famishing for food! Human creatures, male and female, old and young, not gnawed and torn by single woes, but worried at once by Winter, Disease, and Want, as by that triple-headed Dog, whelped in the Realm of Torments!

My ears tingled, and my cheeks flushed with self-reproach, remembering my fretful impatience under my own infictions, no light ones either, till compared with the heavy complications of anguish, moral and physical, experienced by those poor men. My heart swelled with indignation, my soul sickened with disgust, to recal the sobs, sighs, tears, and hysterics—the lamentations and imprecations bestowed by pampered Selfishness on a sick bird or beast, a sore finger, a swelled toe, a lost rubber, a missing luxury, an ill-made garment, a culinary failure!—to think of the cold looks and harsh words cast by the same eyes and lips, eloquent in self-indulgence, on nakedness, starvation, and poverty. Wealth, with his own million of money, pointing to the new half-farthings as fitting money for the million—Gluttony, gorged with dainties, washed down by iced champagne, complacently commending his humble brethren to the brook of Elisha and the salads of Nebuchadnezzar; and Fashion, in furs and velvet, comfortably beholding her squalid sisters shivering in robes de zephyr, woven by winter itself, with the warp of a north, and the woof of an east wind!

"The job up at Bosely is finished," said one of the middle-aged men. "I have enjoyed but three days' work in the last fortnight, and God above knows when I shall get another, even at a shilling a day. And nine mouths to feed, big and little—and nine backs to clothe—with the winter a-settin in—and the rent behind-hand—and never a bed to lie on, and my good woman, poor soul, ready to —" — a choking sound and a hasty gulp of water smothered the rest of the sentence. "There must be something done for us—there *must*," he added, with an emphatic slap of his broad, brown, barky hand, that made the glasses jingle and the idle pipes clatter on the board. And every voice in the room echoed "there must," my own involuntarily welling the chorus.

ly, there must, and that full soon," said the grey-headed man
stian, with an upward appealing look, as if through the smoky
s of the ceiling to God himself for confirmation of the necessity.
: come, lads, time's up, so let's have our chant, and then
der."

e company immediately stood up ; and one of the elders, with a
bass voice, and to a slow, sad air, began a rude song, the compo-
probably of some provincial poet of his own class, the rest
e party joining occasionally in a verse that served for the
n.

A spade ! a rake ! a hoe !
A pickaxe, or a bill !
A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
A flail, or what ye will —
And here's a ready hand
To ply the needful tool,
And skill'd enough, by lessons rough,
In Labour's rugged school.

To hedge, or dig the ditch,
To lop or fell the tree,
To lay the swarth on the sultry field,
Or plough the stubborn lea ;
The harvest stack to bind,
The wheaten rick to thatch,
And never fear in my pouch to find
The tinder or the match.

To a flaming barn or farm
My fancies never roam ;
The fire I yearn to kindle and burn
Is on the hearth of Home ;
Where children huddle and crouch
Through dark long winter days,
Where starving children huddle and crouch,
To see the cheerful rays,
A-glowing on the haggard cheek,
And not in the haggard's blaze !

To Him who sends a drought
To parch the fields forlorn,
The rain to flood the meadows with mud,
The blight to blast the corn,

To Him I leave to guide
The bolt in its crooked path,
To strike the misers rick, and show
The skies blood-red with wrath.

A spade! a rake! a hoe!
A pickaxe, or a bill!
A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
A flail, or what ye will —
The corn to thrash, or the hedge to plash,
The market-team to drive,
Or mend the fence by the cover side,
And leave the game alive.

Ay, only give me work,
And then you need not fear
That I shall snare his worship's hare,
Or kill his grace's deer;
Break into his lordship's house,
To steal the plate so rich;
Or leave the yeoman that had a purse
To welter in a ditch.

Wherever Nature needs,
Wherever Labour calls,
No job I'll shirk of the hardest work,
To shun the workhouse walls;
Where savage laws begrudge
The pauper babe its breath,
And doom a wife to a widow's life,
Before her partner's death.

My only claim is this,
With labour stiff and stark,
By lawful turn, my living to earn,
Between the light and dark;
My daily bread, and nightly bed,
My bacon, and drop of beer —
But all from the hand that holds the land,
And none from the overseer!

No parish money, or loaf,
 No pauper badges for me,
 A son of the soil, by right of toil
 Entitled to my fee.
 No alms I ask, give me my task :
 Here are the arm, the leg,
 The strength, the sinews of a Man,
 To work, and not to beg.

Still one of Adam's heirs,
 Though doom'd by chance of birth
 To dress so mean, and to eat the lean,
 Instead of the fat of the earth ;
 To make such humble meals
 As honest labour can,
 A bone and a crust, with a grace to God,
 And little thanks to man !

A spade ! a rake ! a hoe !
 A pickaxe, or a bill !
 A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
 A flail, or what ye will —
 Whatever the tool to ply,
 Here is a willing drudge,
 With muscle and limb, and woe to him
 Who does their pay begrudge !

Who every weekly score
 Docks labour's little mite,
 Bestows on the poor at the temple door,
 But robb'd them over night.
 The very shilling he hoped to save,
 As health and morals fail,
 Shall visit me in the New Bastile,
 The Spital, or the Gaol !

As the last ominous word ceased ringing, the candle-wick suddenly
 popped into the neck of the stone bottle, and all was darkness and
 silence.

* * * * *

The vision is dispelled — the Fiction is gone — but a Fact and a
 sure remain.

Some time since, a strong inward impulse moved me to paint the destitution of an overtaxed class of females, who work, work, work, for wages almost nominal. But deplorable as is their condition, in the low deep, there is, it seems, a lower still — below that gloomy gulf a darker region of human misery, — beneath that Purgatory a Hell — resounding with more doleful wailings and a sharper outcry — the voice of famishing wretches, pleading vainly for work! work! work! — imploring as a blessing, what was laid upon Man as a curse — the labour that wrings sweat from the brow, and bread from the soil!

As a matter of conscience, that wail touches me not. As my works testify, I am of the working class myself, and in my humble sphere furnish employment for many hands, including paper-makers, draughtsmen, engravers, compositors, pressmen, binders, folders, and stitchers — and critics — all receiving a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. My gains consequently are limited — not nearly so enormous as have been realised upon shirts, slops, shawls, &c. — curiously illustrating how a man or woman might be "clothed with curses as with a garment." My fortune may be expressed without a long row of those ciphers — those O's, at once significant of hundreds of thousands of pounds, and as many ejaculations of pain and sorrow from dependent slaves. My wealth might all be hoarded, if I were miserly, in a gallipot or a tin snuff-box. My guineas, placed edge to edge, instead of extending from the Minories to Golden Square, would barely reach from home to Bread Street. My riches would hardly allow me a roll in them, even if turned into the new copper mites. But then, thank God! no reproach clings to my coin. No tears or blood clog the meshes, no hair, plucked in desperation, is knitted with the silk of my lean purse. No consumptive sempstress can point at me her bony forefinger, and say, "For thee, *sewing in formâ pauperis*, I am become this Living Skeleton!" or hold up to me her fatal needle, as one through the eye of which the scriptural camel must pass ere I may hope to enter heaven. No withered work-woman, shaking at me her dripping suicidal locks, can cry, in a Piercing voice, "For thee, and for six poor pence, I embroidered eighty flowers on this veil" — literally a veil of tears. No famishing labourer, his joints racked with toil, holds out to me in the palm of his broad hard hand seven miserable shillings, and mutters, "For these, and a parish loaf, for six long days, from dawn till dusk, through hot and cold, through wet and dry, I tilled thy land!" My short sleeps are peaceful; my dreams untroubled. No ghastly phantoms with reproachful faces, and silence more terrible than speech, haunt my quiet pillow. No victims of Slow Murder, ushered by the Avenging Fiends, beset my couch, and make awful appointments with me to meet at the Divine bar on the Day of Judgment. No deformed human creatures — men, women, children, smirched black as Negroes, transfigured suddenly, as Demons of the Pit, clutch at my heels to drag me down, down, down, an unfathomable shaft, into a gaping Tartarus. And if sometimes in waking visions I see throngs of little faces, with features preternaturally sharp, and wrinkled brows, and dull, seared orbs, — grouped

with pitying clusters of the young-eyed cherubim, — not for me, thank Heaven! did those crippled children become prematurely old; and precociously evaporate, like so much steam power, the “dew of their youth.”

For me, then, that doleful cry from the Starving Unemployed has no extrinsic horror; no peculiar pang, beyond that sympathetic one which must affect the species in general. Nevertheless, amidst the dismal chorus, one complaining voice rings distinctly on my inward ear; one melancholy Figure flits prominently before my mind's eye, — vague of feature indeed, and in form with only the common outlines of humanity, — but the Eidolon of a real person, a living breathing man, with a known name. One whom I have never seen in the flesh; never spoken with; yet whose very words a still small voice is even now whispering to me, I know not whence, like the wind from a cloud.

For months past, that indistinct Figure, associated, as in a dream, with other dim images, but all mournful — stranger faces, male and female, convulsed with grief — huge hard hands, and smaller and tenderer ones, wrung in speechless anguish, and everlasting farewells — involved with obscure ocean waves, and momentary glimpses of outlandish scenery — for months past, amidst trials of my own, in the intervals of acute pain, perchance even in my delirium, and through the variegated tissue of my own interests and affairs, that sorrowful Vision has recurred to me, more or less vividly, with the intense sense of suffering, cruelty, and injustice, and the strong emotions of pity and indignation, which originated with its birth.

It may be, that some peculiar condition of the body inducing a morbid state of mind — some extreme excitability of the nerves, and through them of the moral sensibility, concurred to induce so deep an impression, to make so warm a sympathy attach itself to a mere Phantom, the representative of an obscure individual, an utter stranger. The Reader must judge: and when the case of my unknown, unconscious, invisible client shall be laid before him, will be able to say whether it required any unnatural sensitiveness of the system, any extraordinary softening of the heart or brain, to feel a strong human interest in the fate of Gifford White.

In the spring of the present year this very unfortunate and very young man was indicted, at the Huntingdon Assizes, for throwing the following letter, addressed externally and internally to the Farmers of Bluntisham, Hunts, into a strawyard: —

“We are determined to set fire to the whole of this place, if you don't set us to work, and burn you in your beds, if there is not an alteration. What do you think the young men are to do if you don't set them to work? They must do something. The fact is, we cannot go on any longer. We must commit robbery, and every thing that is contrary to your wish.

“I am,

“AN ENEMY.”

For this offence, admitted by his plea, the prisoner, aged eighteen, was sentenced, by a judge since deceased, to Transportation for Life!

Far be it from me to palliate Incendiarism. Least of all, when so many conflagrations have recently illuminated the horizon; and so

near the time when the memory of that Arch Incendiary Guy Faux will be revived by effigies and bonfires. I am fully aware of the risk of even this appeal, at such a season, but, with that pleading Shade before me, dare the reddest reflections that may be cast on this paper.

Only catch a real Incendiary, bring his guilt clearly home to him, and let him suffer the extreme penalty of the law. Hang him. Or, if absolutely opposed to capital punishment, and inclined towards the philanthropy of a very French philosophy, adopt the Christianly substitute, recommended in the "Mysteries of Paris," and blind the criminal. Let fire avenge fire, and, according to the prescription for Prince Arthur, with irons hot burn out both his eyes. Cruel and extreme as such tortures may seem, they would scarcely expiate one of the most dastardly and atrocious of human crimes, inasmuch as the perpetrator can neither control its extent nor calculate the results.

The truth is, my faith stops far short of the popular belief in the prevalence of wilful and malignant Fire-raising—that an epidemic of that inflammatory character is so rife and raging as represented in the provinces. I am too jealous of the national character, too chary of the good name of my humble countrymen, and think too well of "a bold peasantry, our country's pride," to look on them, willingly, as a mere pack of Samson's foxes, running from farm to farm with fire-brands tied to their tails. If there be any notable increase in the number of fires, some portion of the excess may be fairly attributable to causes which have converted simple risks into Doubly Hazardous; for example, the prevalence of cigar smoking, and especially the substitution for the old tinder-box of dangerous chemical contrivances, facile of ignition, and distributed by myriads throughout the country. Talismans, that like the Arabian ones, on a slight rubbing, place a Demon at the command of the possessor—spells which have subjected the Fire Spirit to the instant invocation not merely of the wicked, but of the weak and the witless, the infant and the idiot. Generally, we work and play with the element more profusely than formerly; witness the glowing flames, flakes, sparks, and cinders, that sweep across streets, over seas and rivers, and along railroads, from the chimneys, funnels, and furnaces, of the factories, and floating and flying conveyances of Pluto, Vulcan, and Company. Another cause, Spontaneous Combustion, has lately been convicted of the destruction of the railway station at New Cross; and there is no reason to suppose that conflagrations from carelessness, and excessive house-warmings from inebriety, are less common than of old. Children will still play with fire; servants, town and country, persist in snuffing long wicks, as well as noses, with finger and thumb; and Agricultural distress has not so annihilated the breed of Jolly Farmers, but that one, here and there, is still capable of blowing himself out, and putting his candle to bed.

In the mean time, vulgar Exaggeration ascribes every "rapid consumption" of property, not clearly traceable to accident, to a malicious design. The English public, according to Goldsmith, are prone to panics, and he instances them as arming themselves with thick gloves

and stout cudgels against certain popular bugbears in the shapes of mad dogs. And a fatal thing it is, proverbially, for the canine race to get an ill name. But a panic becomes a far more tragical affair when it arms one class of society against another; and instead of mere brutes and curs of low degree, animals of our own species are hunted down and hung, or at best, all but banished to another world, by transportation for life. It is difficult to believe that some such local panic did not influence the very severe sentence passed on Gifford White. Indeed the existence of something of the kind seems intimated by the judge himself, along with the extraordinary dictum that a verbal burn is worse than the actual cautery. Lord Abinger said :—

“ The offence was of a most atrocious character ; and it might almost be said, that the sending of letters threatening to burn the property of the parties to whom they were addressed was worse than putting the threat into execution ; for when a man lost his property by fire, he at least knew the worst of it, but he to whom such threats were made, was made to live in a state of continual terror and alarm.”

Very true — and very harshly applied. The Farmers of Bluntisham are not of my acquaintance ; but presuming them to be not more nervous and timorous than farmers in general, might not their terror and alarm have been pacified on rather easier terms ? Would not the banishment of the culprit for seven, or at most fourteen years, have allowed time, ample time, for the yeomanly nerves to have recovered their tone ; for their affrighted hair, erect as stubble, to have subsided prone as rolled grass ; nay, for the very name of Gifford White to have evaporated from their agricultural heads ? Were I a Bluntisham farmer, I could not eat with relish another rasher of bacon, or swallow with satisfaction another glass of strong ale, without protesting publicly against such a sacrifice to my supposed aspenfits, and setting on foot a petition amongst my neighbours for a mitigation of that severe and satirical sentence which condemned a fellow parishioner to expiate my fears by fifty-two years of penance — according to the scriptural calculation of human life — in the land of the kangaroo. I could not sleep soundly, and know, that for my sake a son of the same soil had been rooted out like a common weed — severed from kith and kin ; from hearth and home, if he had one ; from his mother-country, hard step-mother though she had proved ; from a familiar land and native air, to a foreign one and a new climate, with strange faces around him, and strange stars above him, — a banished man, not for a little while, or for a long while, but for ever !

But, methinks I hear a voice say, it was necessary to make an example — a proceeding always accompanied by a certain degree of hardship, if not injustice, as regards the party selected to be punished *in terrorem* ; unless the choice be made of a criminal especially deserving such a painful preference — as for robbery with personal violence : whereas there appear to be no aggravations of the offence for which Gifford White was sentenced to a murderer's atonement. On the contrary, he pleaded guilty ; a course generally admitted as an extenuation of guilt : his youth ought to have been a circumstance

in his favour ; and, above all, the consideration that a threat does not necessarily involve the intent, much less the deed. All who have been led, by word or writing, to hope or fear, for good or evil, have had reason to know how far is Promise from Performance, — as far as England from New South Wales. Expectants never die the sooner for golden prospects held out to them ; and threatened folks are long-lived, to a proverb. And why ? Because the enemy who announces his designs is the least dangerous : as the Scotch say, “ his bark is waur than his bite.” The truth is, menaces are about the most abundant, idle, and empty of human vapourings ; the mere puffings, blowings, gruntings, and growlings from the safety-valves and waste-pipes of high-pressure engines. The promissory notes of threateners to large amounts are ludicrously associated, instead of payment, with “ no effects.” Who of us has not heard a good mother, a fond mother, a doting mother, but sharp tempered, promise her own dear but troublesome offspring, her very pets, such savage inflictions, such breakings of bones and knocking off plaguy little heads, as ought, sincerely uttered, to have consigned her to the custody of the police ? There, as my Uncle Toby says, she found vent. Who has never known a friend, a worthy man, but a passionate one, to indulge in such murderous threats against the life, body, and limbs of a tight boot-maker, or a loose tailor ; a blunt creditor, or a sharp critic ; as ought, if in earnest, to have placed him in handcuffs and a straight waistcoat ? But nobody mistakes these blazes of temper for the burnings of settled malignity — these harmless flashes of sheet lightning for the destructive gleam of the forked. It is quite possible, therefore, that the incendiary letter of Gifford White, though breathing Congreves and Lucifers, was purely theoretical ; albeit read by the judge as if in serious earnest, like the fulminating prospectuses of the Duc de Normandie or Captain Warner.

I confess to have searched, in vain, through the epistle for any animus of peculiar atrocity. Its address, generally to the farmers, shows it not to have been the inspiration of personal malice or private revenge. The threat is not a direct and positive one, as in resolved retaliation for some by-gone wrong ; but put hypothetically, and rather in the nature of a warning of probable consequences, dependent on future contingencies. The wish of the writer is obviously not father to the menace : on the contrary, he expostulates, and appeals, methinks most touchingly, to the reason, the justice, even the compassion, of the very parties — to be burnt in their beds. So clear a proof, to me, of the absence of any serious intent, or malice prepense, that the only agitation from the fall of such a missive in my farm-yard, if I had one, would be the flutter amongst the poultry. At least theirs would be the only personal terror and alarm, — for, with other feelings, who could fail to be moved by a momentous question and declaration re-echoed by hundreds and thousands of able and willing but starving labourers. “ What are we to do if you don't set us to work ? We must do something. The fact is, we cannot go on any longer ! ”

Can the wholesale emigration, so often proposed, be only transport-

ation in disguise for using such language in common with Gifford White?

To me—speaking from my heart, and recording my deliberate opinions on a material that, frail as it is, will long outlast my own fabric,—there is something deeply affecting in the spectacle of a young man, in the prime of health and vigour, offering himself, a voluntary slave, in the Labour-market without a purchaser—eagerly proffering to barter the use of his body, the day-long exertion of his strength, the wear and tear of flesh and blood, bone and muscle, for the common necessities of life—earnestly craving for bread on the penal conditions prescribed by his Creator—and in vain—in vain! Well for those who enjoy each Blessing of earth that there are volunteers to work out the Curse! Well for the drones of the social hive that there are bees of so industrious a turn, willing for an infinitesimal share of the honey to undertake the labour of its fabrication!

Let these considerations avail an unfortunate man, or rather youth, perhaps an oppressed one, subject to the tyranny of some such ticket system as lately required the interference of the Home Secretary, in behalf of the labourers of another county.—

Methinks I see him, poor Phantom! an impertinent unit of a surplus population, humbly pleading for bread, and offered an acre of stones—to be cleared at five farthings a rood. Work and wages for the asking!—with the double alternative of the Union-house, or a free passage—the North-West one—to the still undiscovered coast of Bohemia!—

Is a rash youth, so wrought on, to be eternally Ex-Isled from this sweet little one of our own, for only throwing a few intemperate “thoughts that breathe and words that burn” into an anonymous letter?

Let these things plead for a fellow-creature, goaded, perhaps, by the sense of wrong, as well as the physical pangs of hunger, and driven by the neglect of all milder applications to appeal to the selfish fears of men who will neither read the signs of the times, nor heed warnings, unless written, like Belshazzar’s, in letters of fire!

One thing is certain. These are not times for visiting with severity the offences of the labouring poor: a class who, it is admitted by all parties, have borne the severest trials that can afflict the soul and body of man, with an exemplary fortitude, and a patience almost superhuman. A great fact at which every true Englishman should exult, as at a National Victory, as in moral heroism it is. I, for one, am proud of my poor countrymen, and naturally loth to believe that a character which so reluctantly combines with disaffection, and indulges so sparingly in outbreak, will freely absorb so vile a spirit as that of incendiarism. At any rate, before rashly adopting such a conclusion, common justice and common sense bid me look elsewhere for the causes of any unusual number of fires in the rural districts. As a mere matter of patriotism, one would rather ascribe such unfilial outrages to an alien than to a son of the soil. We have lately seen a Foreign Prince, an ally, in a time of peace, speculating with much playful naïveté on the best modes for squibbing our shipping and

rocketing our harbours — the facility with which he could ignite the Thames and mull the Medway — sink the Cinque Ports — blow off Beachy's head, shiver Deal into splinters, and knock the two Reculver steeples into one. His Highness, it is true, contemplated a bellicose state, ceremoniously proclaimed according to the usage of polite nations: but suppose some outlandish savage, as uncivilised as unshorn, say from Terra del Fuego, animated with an insane hostility to England, and burning to test his skill in Pyrotechnics — might not such a barbarian be tempted to dispense with a formal declaration of war, and make a few experimental essays how to introduce his treacherous combustibles into our perfidious towns and hamlets? Foreign incendiaries for me, rather than native; and accident or Spontaneous Combustion before either! But if we must believe in it home-made — surely, in preference to the industrious labourer, suspicion should fall on those sturdy trampers that infest the country, the foremost to crave for food and money, the last to ask for work, and one of whom might light up a dozen parishes. If it be otherwise, if a class eminently loyal, patient, peaceable, and rational, have really become such madmen throwing about fire, it is high time, methinks, with universal Artesian borings, to begin to scuttle our island for fear of its being burnt. But no — that Shadow of an Incendiary, with uplifted hands, and streaming repentant eyes, disavows with earnest gesture the foul intent; and shadow as he is, my belief acquits him, and makes me echo the imaginary sigh with which he fades again into the foggy distance between me and Port Sydney.

It is in your power, Sir James Graham! to lay the Ghost that is haunting me. But that is a trifle. By a due intercession with the earthly Fountain of Mercy, you may convert a melancholy Shadow into a happier Reality — a righted man — a much pleasanter image to mingle in our waking visions, as well as in those dreams which, as Hamlet conjectures, may soothe or disturb us in our coffins. Think, Sir, of poor Gifford White — inquire into his hard case, and give it your humane consideration, as that of a fellow-man with an immortal soul — a "possible angel" — to be met hereafter face to face.

To me, should this appeal meet with any success, it will be one of the dearest deeds of my pen. I shall not repent a wide deviation from my usual course; or begrudge the pain and trouble caused me by the providential visitings of an importunate Phantom. In any case, my own responsibility is at an end. I have relieved my heart, appeased my conscience, and absolved my soul.

THOMAS HOOD.

TO THE ACORN.

THOU little Acorn! hail to thee,
 Delicate hope of the giant tree!
 The rose may blush into beauty rare,
 The lily may lift her chalice fair;
 And many a tree and many a flower
 With richest colour for their dower,
 From the gorgeous East, or the glowing West,
 May challenge our homage as loveliest—
 But fairest art *thou*, for to fancy's eye
 Thou bringest bright dreams of the days gone by.

Ay, Acorn, thou recallest the time
 Of ancient nature's earliest prime,
 When giant forests spread dark and wide,
 And the tall elk stalk'd with his feet of pride,
 And the bison roam'd, and the gaunt wolf stood,
 Terror, and lord of the pathless wood,
 And man from his dreamless trance awoke,
 And framed the flint axe, and hewed the oak
 For his first rude hut, and, with shaft and bow,
 Did fearlessly thro' these dark shades go.

Then, goodly Acorn, roused by thee,
 Come thoughts of the greenwood wild and free:
 Of the gallant stag, and the bold outlaw,
 And his merry life in the greenwood shaw—
 Of knight, and damsel, and gay ménége
 Sweeping along with minstrelsy—
 With horn and hound, and palfry good,
 Chasing the hart in the blithe greenwood.
 These gallant days! when, proud and free,
 Bold Robin held tryst 'neath the greenwood tree.

But thou of more witching scenes dost tell,
 Of faery ring, and of mystic spell—
 Titania sippeth her draught of dew
 From thy well-carved goblet. O! sure 'twas true,
 That pleasant tale of the tiny folk
 Dancing by moonlight beneath the oak—
 Charming the hush'd air, soothing the deep,—
 Flinging bright visions o'er minstrel's sleep.
 Those fables were sooth,—ay, sooth, I ween,—
 For here is the cup of the faery queen!

Then, delicate hope of the giant tree!
 Acorn most graceful, O thanks to thee
 For each fitful fancy, each pleasant thought,
 Which thou to my dreaming mind hast brought!
 O wealthy indeed is Fancy's dower,
 To wander thro' ages in one short hour,
 And lone, in the depths of the forest, to see
 Visions joyous and fair as thou bringest to me.

H. L.

EPIGRAM

ON HER MAJESTY'S VISIT TO THE CITY.

We've heard of comets, blazing things,
 With "fear of change" perplexing Kings;
 But, lo! a novel sight and strange,
 A Queen who does not fear a 'Change!

T. H.

THE STREETS OF PARIS.

(Concluded from p. 416.)

THOSE of our readers who have at any time wandered amongst the labyrinth of houses known as the Quartier Latin, and which is especially affected as the residence of students and grisettes, will perhaps recollect a long winding street which commences at the Place St. Michel, and ends at the bridge of the same name. So long ago as the year 1247, the second house on the right in this street was inhabited by a lute-maker, and decorated with a sign representing King David playing on the harp, marvellously well painted, and which was the admiration of the whole neighbourhood. The worthy lute-maker had a daughter of the name of Agnes, who was remarkable for her beauty, and who one evening slipped out into the adjoining Rue St. Hyacinthe, where a mounted cavalier had been for some minutes waiting. The stranger placed the fair Agnes, who appeared nothing loth, upon a pillion behind him, and, having recommended her to pass her white arms round his waist as security against a fall, set spurs to his steed and galloped away.

The poor lute-maker, to whom Agnes had said nothing of the ride she intended taking, waited anxiously for his daughter's return, but in vain. It was long past curfew, and the wind blew a hurricane, but still no Agnes appeared. Suddenly there was a gust of unusual violence, a rattle against the wall of the house, and a clatter on the pavement. King David and his harp had fallen into the gutter.

The lute-maker at once understood that this was a warning of some danger to him or his, and he hastened out in search of his daughter. But on opening the door he was met by a page of dark and ill-omened aspect, who held out to him a letter. The page was humpbacked, his cloak smelt of sulphur, one foot was higher than the other; in short, he was evidently one of Satan's own livery; and the lute-maker was so terrified, that he staggered back into the house, and shut the door in all haste. The page, however, pushed the letter under the door. It was from Agnes herself, who, being grown equally weary of her old father and his sermons, and of King David and his harp, had been fascinated by the satin doublet, honied words, and graceful bearing of a gentleman of the court. It was in vain that her father set the Grand Provost and his archers to seek her out; she was nowhere to be found. In grief and anger the lute maker burnt his sign, and removed to another quarter of the town; but King David and his harp were not forgotten, and, to this day, the street goes by the name of Rue de la Harpe.

The ancient Roman palace *Des Thermes*, which was inhabited by the Emperor Julian when proconsul of Gaul, and subsequently by the earlier of the French kings, was adjacent to the Rue de la Harpe,

where a remnant of it is still to be seen. A legend relating to it, and which is briefly mentioned in Daniel's history of France, is given at greater length in these chronicles, the details being taken, we are told, from an old Italian manuscript in the Armenian convent at Venice. It refers to the two daughters of Charlemagne, Gisla and Rotrude, who, after their father's death, lived for some time in a sort of honourable captivity in the Palais des Thermes, known at that period as the Vieux Palais. The story is not without its wild interest. It is as follows :—

On an evening of the month of February 814, two horsemen of knightly mein and graceful bearing, who had apparently ridden far and fast, entered the courtyard of the Palais des Thermes. Before their feet left the stirrups they delivered to the seneschal, who advanced to meet them, a parchment sealed with the royal arms, which came from the king, Louis le Debonnaire, who was on his way to Paris, and whom they preceded but by a few hours. It was some weeks after the death of Charlemagne, and King Louis, who had been to Aix-la-Chapelle to celebrate the obsequies of his father, which lasted forty days, was returning to Paris to have himself proclaimed, for the second time, successor to the kingdom and empire.

To the infinite surprise of the two knights, scarcely had the seneschal read the missive of which they had been the bearers, when he commanded the gates to be shut, and, at the same time, one of his officers approached the strangers and required them to deliver up their swords. Without attending to their astonishment, the seneschal led the way into a hall of the palace occasionally used as a guard-room, but which was then unoccupied. Lights were brought, and he again attentively perused the parchment sealed with the king's seal. Then addressing himself to the younger of the two knights,

"It is you, Messire," he said, "who are called Raoul de Lys?"

The knight assented.

"And your companion?"

"Robert de Quercy."

"It is my painful duty, Messires," said the seneschal courteously, "to detain you both prisoners. The despatch, of which you were the bearers, contains the king's commands to that effect."

"And our crime?" demanded the knights.

"Of that I am ignorant. The king's letter is brief and peremptory. You are to be kept prisoners, and separated till his arrival."

"Separated! why so?" exclaimed Robert de Quercy. "Raoul is my friend, my brother. Of what crime do they dare to accuse us?"

"I know not," replied the seneschal. "Consult your own consciences. I can but execute my master's orders. Messire de Quercy, you will please to accompany me."

The two knights embraced one another before parting.

"Courage, brother!" whispered De Quercy to his friend. "I may yet find means for our release."

And with a significant pressure of the hand, they parted.

For a long time had these two young men been united by the bonds of the warmest friendship. From their earliest youth they had

shared the same pleasures and the same perils; and, moreover, for some time past, a yet stronger link of sympathy had established itself between them. They loved, and were beloved by Rotrude and Gisla, daughters of Charlemagne by his second wife Hildegarde, and sisters of Louis le Debonnaire. The two princesses were then in the palace, awaiting, not without apprehension, the return of their brother; who being now undisputed ruler over the magnificent empire which his heroic father had left behind him, had already given indications of an intention to banish all semblance of pleasure from his court, and introduce the ascetic discipline of a convent.

After a supper, consisting of some ill-cooked boar's flesh and a jug of sour hydromel, Raoul de Lys remained for some time pacing up and down the hall at arms in which he was confined. His lamp had become extinguished, but from time to time the moon struggling through an opening in the clouds threw a faint beam into the gloomy hall, and Raoul profited by the transient light, to gaze rapturously on a medallion which he wore suspended round his neck. It contained the portrait of Rotrude, the daughter of Charlemagne, whom Constantine, the Greek, would fain have made his bride, had not her heart been already given, and her father unwilling to constrain her inclinations.

Midnight had long struck, and the unfortunate young knight was still continuing his monotonous and melancholy walk, when a light suddenly gleamed through the crevices of the panelling; a secret door was pushed noiselessly aside, and Robert de Quercy appeared at the aperture, leading by the hand a lady whose face was covered by her veil.

"Rotrude!" exclaimed Raoul in an accent of delight. The lady threw back her veil. It was Gisla, her features pale as those of an alabaster statue.

"And Rotrude! where is she?" cried Raoul.

Robert de Quercy stooped down and seized a ring attached to one of the marble flags that paved the hall. Then signing to his friend to assist him, they raised the massive block and a staircase appeared.

"My sister will soon be here," said Gisla, in an agitated voice. "We learnt the peril that menaced you, and are come to your rescue."

"What peril?" asked Raoul, taking Gisla's hands, which were cold as the stone he had just lifted.

"Our brother Louis arrives to-morrow," she replied, "and I know from Volrade, count of the palace, that he comes but to punish. Before occupying the imperial palace he has sworn to purge and purify it. He knows of the ties between us, and to conceal the shame of his house, yourself and Robert are to die. He will afterwards deliberate on the punishment of Rotrude and myself."

"Accused be the prince who remembers but the faults and forgets the services of his followers!" exclaimed Robert. "Should he not bear in mind the affection his father bore both Raoul and myself? It was Charlemagne who, unwilling to lose your society, Gisla, and that of your sister Rotrude, refused to give you to any of the numerous

princes who sought your hands. Can it be your own brother who has thus sworn your destruction and ours? Oh, no! that cannot be. The body of Charles the Great is as yet scarcely cold, and 'tis but from yesterday that Louis holds the sceptre."

"He grasps it firmly to punish thee," said the king himself, who at that moment appeared at the top of the staircase, dragging his sister Rotrude by the hand, and followed by four men whose faces were shaded by their hoods.

"The flying dove has met with the fowler," said Louis, placing his sister upon a bench; "I, too, know the secret passages of the Palais des Thermes, and it is here that I come to give my first judgment. I will commence with you, fair Rotrude, you who fled from me as though I had been a foe. I am a good brother, on the contrary, as the four gentlemen whom I have brought with me shall testify. They are come to serve as your witnesses."

"Witnesses!" repeated Rotrude and Gisla, in tremulous accents.

"Yes—your marriage shall be celebrated this very night. You, Gisla, shall marry Robert Count de Quercy; you, Rotrude, Raoul Baron of Lys, two of the best lances in my deceased father's retinue."

"It is our dearest wish!" exclaimed the two young knights. "Noble emperor, we await your commands."

"First, don these arms," said Louis, making a sign to his followers, who immediately produced two complete suits of armour. "It is not fitting," continued the king, "turning to his sisters, that princesses should be present at the toilet of chevaliers and men-at-arms." With a glance of inexpressible joy and happiness at their lovers, Rotrude and Gisla left the apartment.

Two o'clock pealed from the belfry of the Eglise St. Jacques, when the princesses re-entered the hall, followed by the king and his attendants, who had been to fetch them. They found their lovers accoutred in armour and seated upon two high-backed open chairs, their vizors down, and their heads sunk upon their breasts as though they were praying. Louis and his followers left the room. The two knights still remained motionless, and when Gisla and Rotrude, surprised at their immobility, stepped up to them and took their hands, the iron clad limbs were heavy to lift, and fell back with a dismal clang against the chairs. Two inanimate corpses were all that remained of Robert de Quercy and Raoul de Lys. They had been stifled in the mechanical armour that had been sent as a gift to Charlemagne from the imperial palace at Ravenna, in return for a vase of jewels which the emperor had presented to that city.

"In the year 1560," says the manuscript already alluded to, "in the course of some researches made in the ancient Palais des Thermes a helmet was found, so contrived that when put on, a secret mechanism closed every opening, at the same time that the lower part of the gorget pressed against the breast of the wearer. In this helmet was a man's head, perfectly preserved owing to the absence of all air, and of which the teeth and beard were still of remarkable beauty."

In spite of this and other domestic cruelties on the part of Charlemagne's successor, he preserved to the last the title of the Debonnaire,

and died with the reputation of a very virtuous although not a very able monarch.

The house forming the corner of the Rues Quincampoix and De Venise, and which is to the present day a wineshop, was used in 1719 as a tavern, known by the sign of the Wooden Sword, and noted for the orgies enacted there by the Mississippians. Count de Horn, the brother of a petty German prince, and distantly related to the then regent of France, conceived a plan, for the execution of which he associated with himself one De Miles, a Piedmontese gentleman, and a certain L'Estang, son of a banker at Tournay, who had assumed the name and title of Chevalier d'Estampes. These three persons induced Lacroix, one of the richest of the Mississippians, to accompany them to the Wooden Sword, under pretence of treating with him for the sale of an estate. They desired to be shown into a room which looked out upon the Rue de Venise, and when there, they stabbed Lacroix in order to get possession of his portfolio. The murder was committed by De Horn and De Miles, L'Estang keeping watch in the street below. A waiter who was upon the stairs, happening to open the door of the room in which the assassins were, witnessed the crime, shut and locked the door, and ran to give the alarm. L'Estang, when he saw that his accomplices were discovered, took to flight, left Paris immediately, and succeeded in escaping out of France and taking refuge at New Orleans, where he had an opportunity of judging for himself of the value of the Mississippi shares he had wished to steal. De Miles, by the assistance of a beam which propped one of the walls of the tavern, slipped down into the Rue de Venise, ran through the church of St. Sepulchre, and was arrested in the Marché des Innocens. Count de Horn tried to escape by the same means that De Miles had taken, but he fell from the beam, strained his ancle, and was made prisoner. There was no difficulty about proving the crime; it was a premeditated assassination, and the punishment, according to law, was death upon the rack. All the interest of the French nobility was exerted to save the young Count de Horn from so dreadful and infamous a punishment, but the regent was firm in his refusal to commute the sentence of either culprit. The Duke of St. Simon represented to him that Count de Horn was not only a nobleman by birth, but also allied to several princely families in Germany. Philip of Orleans was still inexorable. At last the duke said, "But, monseigneur, M. le Comte de Horn has the honour to be a relative of your own." To which the regent made the well-known reply, "*Quand j'ai du mauvais sang, je me le fais tirer.*" Law and Dubois insisted that an example was indispensable at a time when so many men carried their fortunes in their pockets. Count de Horn and his accomplice expired on the wheel.

Shortly after this execution, the Exchange of the Mississippians was transferred by royal ordinance to the Place Vendôme, and subsequently to the Hôtel de Soissons. The latter belonged to Prince Cargnan, who had a number of huts or sheds erected in the garden, each of which was let for five hundred livres a month; and he obtained a

decree forbidding the Mississippi game to be carried on elsewhere than in his garden. By this ingenious plan, he secured an annual revenue of four or five hundred thousand livres, for as long, at least, as the fever lasted.

The palmy days of the Rue Quincampoix were now at an end; it lost its thousands of inhabitants, the houses were deserted and the sentry boxes removed from the roofs; the cellars were no longer counting-houses, nor did the rent of a room amount to a larger sum than the original purchase-money of the house. The street was reduced to its former insignificance, and became once more what it still remains, a lonely melancholy-looking lane.

Perhaps no street in Paris is richer in associations of various kinds than the long avenue of houses known as the Rue and Faubourg St. Honoré. When the city first began to extend itself beyond the swampy island in the Seine, which, in the beginning, comprised the whole of Paris within its narrow limits, it occurred to some of the nobles that pure air, open country, and pleasant gardens were preferable to their gloomy abodes in the cité, and the richer among them built themselves spacious mansions at a short distance from Paris. The shopkeepers, especially the drapers, furriers, and embroiderers, and those who sold rich stuffs and other articles of luxury, followed the example of those by whose custom they lived, and presently, behind the palaces and hotels of the nobles, there arose the Rue St. Honoré. Its first name is unknown, but as it was built by small portions at a time, it is probable that it had various appellations. About the year 1200, one portion was called Rue de la Ferronnerie, and another Rue Chateau Festu. The former name is still retained by a street leading out of the Rue St. Honoré, and to which an interesting historical reminiscence is attached. An old house, grimy and time-blackened, which forms the corner of the street, has a bust, and a marble slab with an inscription fixed to the wall. The bust is that of Henry the Fourth, the only French king whose name has come down to posterity associated with the love and affection of the people. It is there that he was stabbed by Ravaillac on the 14th of May 1610. A little farther on, in the Rue de Tonnellerie, is another inscription marking the house in which Molière was born. In the Rue St. Honoré some of the first struggles of the revolution took place; and it was in the same street, or within a few yards of it, that the bloody and unequal contest between the unfortunate Protestants and the fanatical assassins in the pay of Charles the Ninth and Catherine de Medicis commenced upon the ever-memorable night of the Saint Bartholomew.

A volume might easily be written on the names of the streets of Paris; those they now bear and those they have borne. It has been a fancy of the French to change the names of public monuments and streets each time that the dynasty or the government of the country was changed. Thus some have been rebaptized four or five times during the last sixty years, and others that have scarcely existed half so long are already at their third name. The Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, which gives its name to the district that was a short time back the

most fashionable in Paris, is a striking example of this practice. Its first name was the *Chaussée Gaillon*, from a gate opposite to which it commenced; its second, the *Rue de l'Hôtel Dieu*, because it led to a farm belonging to the hospital of that name; its third appellation was the *Chaussée d'Antin*, taken from the *Hôtel d'Antin*. Then came the revolution, and in 1791 it received the name of *Mirabeau*, who had lived there. In 1793 the Reign of Terror had already proscribed the name of *Mirabeau*, and *Rue de Mont Blanc* was the title given to this most changeable of streets, from one of the new departments that had been annexed to France. When the Bourbons returned in 1815, the Parisian authorities corrected the revolutionary baptism, and the *Chaussée d'Antin* again became the *Chaussée d'Antin*.

The *Rue Lafitte* is another of these many-named streets. The first stone of the first house was laid in 1770, and before the end of the year the street was complete. It was called the *Rue d'Artois*, out of compliment to one of the young princes of the blood, then thirteen years of age. The prince's two elder brothers had each their street, *Rue Dauphine* and *Rue de Provence*, and the little Count d'Artois would have been offended if he had not had his also. He accordingly stood godfather to the new street, which on that account immediately of course ranked amongst the most aristocratic of its brethren. Aristocracy unfortunately was going rapidly out of fashion; titles were at a discount, the fleurs-de-lys were shivered and demolished, the storm became daily more violent, and the sponsor of the *Rue d'Artois* was one of the first upon the list of emigrants. The name was changed to the *Rue Cerutti*, after an unfrocked Jesuit, an intimate of *Mirabeau* and *Talleyrand*, who distinguished himself in the early days of the revolution, but died within a few months of his friend *Mirabeau*. The restoration gave it back its name of *Artois*, and the revolution of 1830 converted it into the *Rue Lafitte*.

There is surely something petty and paltry in this perpetual alteration of names, as if the remembrance of a great man, a departed dynasty, or an important event, could be spunged out of men's minds as easily as a few letters can be knocked off a wall. We question very much whether *Bonaparte* is likely to be forgotten an hour the sooner because the *Rue Napoleon* is now the *Rue de la Paix*.

The derivation of the names of Parisian streets is, in a great number of instances, very curious, and to be traced back to various old customs and traditions. Thus the ground on which the street of the *Martyrs* now stands is said to have been passed over by *St. Denis* after his execution, the saint carrying his head in his hand—a fact recorded of more than one of the old saints and martyrs. The *Rue de Jerusalem* was a spot where pious pilgrims going to or returning from the Holy Land were wont to make a pause and offer up prayers. Its character is now a little changed, it being the headquarters of the Parisian police; the resort, not of *Palmer*s with sun-bathed shoon and cockle-shell on hat, but of the thousands of ill-looking *mouchards* and police spies deemed necessary for the preservation and security of the kingdom of France and its inhabitants. The

Rue de l'Enfer was the scene of St. Denis's struggle with Satan, where the holy man was sorely tempted, but finally prevailed. The Rue de l'Echelle and de l'Estrapade indicate, we may suppose, places where the punishments of hanging and flogging were inflicted, as the Rue de l'Echaudé, or of the Scalded, may have witnessed the tortures of coiners, who in France were formerly put to death in that manner. The Rue de la Jussienne, a corruption of l'Egyptienne, is the scene of the first portion of the old legend on which Hugo's Notre Dame de Paris is founded. The Rue du Puits qui parle, or of the Talking Well, seems of rather difficult etymology, until explained by a tradition of the middle ages, which says that for thirty years a poor despairing sinner sung the seven penitential psalms from his wretched abode at the bottom of a well, recommencing when he had finished them, singing louder by night than by day, "Magnâ voce per umbras;" his bed a few blades of fowl straw, his food the crusts thrown down to him by the charitable.

The Rue des Vieilles Etuves was occupied by the barbers, who were also the *étuvistes*, or bath-keepers, and of whom Guillaume de Villeneuve speaks in his curious old book "Les Crieries de Paris." They used to stand at their doors inviting the passers-by to enter and avail themselves of their ministry. Their usual cry consisted in the following quaint couplet :

" Seigneur, quar vous allez baingnier
Et estuver sans délayer.
Li bains sont chaut, c'est sanz mentir."

Barbers, in those days, did not enjoy the best of reputations; and other less honourable but more lucrative occupations, which were frequently united with their ostensible ones, entitled them to consider themselves especially under the protection of the god Mercury. Of one of these knights of the razor, who, towards the close of the fourteenth century, occupied a house in the Rue des Marmouzets, a horrible history remains on record. The house in which he dwelt was one of the best in the street, and went by the name of Maison des Marmouzets. One side was occupied by the barber, and the other by a confectioner; and if the former was celebrated for his skill in heating baths, in bleeding, shaving, and all the other offices of his trade, the latter was no less renowned for the excellence of his pasties. No one could reproach him with having ever sold a pie the meat of which was not of the freshest and best description; his pastry was never stale, nor his cream sour; and he had in consequence acquired a great reputation throughout Paris. Notwithstanding the large number of his customers, he kept only one apprentice, in order, as he said, that the secret of his skill in seasoning pasties might not be divulged. The barber was equally in favour with the public. No sooner did his bath servants appear in the street, proclaiming that *Les bains sont chauds!* than his establishment was crowded, and every bath occupied in an instant. He was famed also for his skill in surgery, and in a knowledge of drugs and simples was considered equal to any physician.

It so happened that sundry strange rumours had from time to time

circulated in the Rue des Marmouzets. People talked of shrieks heard in the night, of strangers who had entered the street at eventide but had never been seen to leave it. More than once stains of blood had been noticed upon the stones, blood which could not proceed from the barber's shop, because he was compelled, under pain of fine and imprisonment, to throw into the river the result of any bloodlettings which he performed. One night, however, piercing cries were heard to issue from the barber's laboratory, which a poor student from Germany had a short time before been seen to enter. The next moment the student appeared at the door covered with the blood that issued from a frightful wound in his throat. In answer to the inquiries of those who came running to his assistance, he related how the barber had seduced him into his house by a promise of shaving him free of charge; but that he had scarcely seated himself when he felt the razor, instead of ridding him of his beard, cut deep into his throat. He sprang to his feet, averted with difficulty several blows which the assassin aimed at him, and then closing with his foe, succeeded in overcoming him and throwing him through a trap-door which stood open. The wounded man had no sooner finished his narrative than he fainted from exhaustion and loss of blood. The barber's shop was immediately entered and searched, but the trap-door was closed and the barber not to be found. On farther investigation however they discovered a cellar common to the two shops, in which they surprised the pastry-cook busied cutting up the body of his accomplice, whom he had murdered as soon as he was thrown down the trap-door, without observing or recognising his features. It was thus, as it appeared, that he was in the habit of providing meat for his pasties, "better than any others," as an old writer, Dubreul, remarks with infinite *naïveté*, "inasmuch as human flesh is the most delicate, by reason of its better nourishment."

In memory of the monstrous crimes that had been there perpetrated, the house was demolished, and an expiatory monument raised on the spot where it had stood. It was decreed that no other habitation should ever be built on the same ground, and it was not till a century and a half later, that Pierre Belut, a counsellor, obtained letters patent from Francis the First, empowering him to erect a house upon the site of the *Maison des Marmouzets*.

We have gleaned but sparingly from the large volume before us, and much remains to reward the reader whom our extracts may encourage to peruse the "*Rues de Paris*." Two or three chapters, or rather portions of chapters, would have been better left out, although they were perhaps necessary to the completeness of the work. Details concerning the depraved classes of the population of a great city are less likely to interest than disgust the general reader; nor is it always easy to convey such particulars in terms exactly fitted for the eyes or ears of the fastidious. The writers of the *Chronicles of Paris* have, however, evidently done their best in that as in all other respects, and on the whole the book may be considered as creditable to its authors, as it will undoubtedly prove entertaining to its readers.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS OF GIDEON SHADDOE, ESQ.

No. V.

"On dirait un logis par les spectres hanté."

Les Burgroes.

AMONG the visions confined to certain localities few, if we are to give credence to the evidence on record, have made more seers shudder than the "White Lady of Coll' Alto."

Lord Byron in sober prose gives the history of this "*real, well-authenticated Donna Bianca*," who, one day dressing the hair of a Countess Colalto, was seen by her mistress to smile upon her husband in the glass, was immured by the Countess's order in the wall of the castle, and ever after haunted the family; and the "Old man eloquent"—(may his days be long in the land; his name will never die as long as our language exists)—tells the story most affectingly and harmoniously in his "Italy," adding in his notes that this is the only instance with which he is acquainted, of a ghost in Italy since Brutus sat in his tent. But that this White Lady is the only modern Italian ghost is more than doubtful. Lord Byron's palazzo on the Arno seems to have swarmed with them.

That *he* was superstitious—and few highly imaginative men have not a secret leaning to a belief in supernatural events—is clear not only from his own confession, but from the solemn tone in which he generally spoke of such occurrences. Even in his letter to Mr. Murray, alluding to the ghostly disturbances of the house on the Arno, notwithstanding the light ironical style and the attempt to account for the noises, an uneasy feeling as to the visitations complained of by the "Learned Fletcher" and others, is perceptible. Possessing a mind of extraordinary powers, Lord Byron was blessed—or cursed—with the most acute sensibility. Generous and brave to a fault—if generosity and bravery can ever be excessive—the very soul of friendship and love, with a heart open as day to melting charity, he resembled a charming and sublime instrument whose chords touched by delicate and skilful fingers discourse most eloquent music, but rudely struck by coarse and ignorant hands send forth the most jarring discords. Alas! How little was he understood, till it was too late.

Such a sensitive temperament was well moulded to receive impressions from the world of spirits. When he was at Genoa, he told Mr. Cowell that some friends of Mr. Shelley, sitting together one evening, had seen that gentleman distinctly, as they thought, walk

into a little wood at Lerici, when at the same moment, as they afterwards discovered, he was far away in quite a different direction. "This," added Lord Byron, in a low, awe-struck tone of voice, "was but ten days before poor Shelley died."*

The term "friends" (in the plural) is used, it will be observed, in the account of Shelley's supposed appearance,—another instance of the same vision being seen at the same time by more than one person. When Lord Byron was abroad, some to whom he was well known declared that they had seen him in London; and it was but the other day that a friend averred that he had seen in the street and saluted an invalid, who had returned his salutation, and would hardly be convinced that the state of the party's health was such as to render it impossible for him to leave his couch.†

It has been said that every man, woman, and child has a "double,"—a very convenient doctrine, especially when persons are detected in equivocal situations where there are no enchanted pear-trees; but no one familiar with courts of justice, who has witnessed the many cases of mistaken identity which are constantly occurring, will deny that notwithstanding the inexhaustible variety of form and feature, there are human beings of such close resemblance that a common observer would easily take one for the other in the absence of "the double,"—and this not only in the case of twins,—where the likeness in stature, feature, and gesture is often complete,—but in that of persons who are utter strangers, and who probably never beheld each other. We have seen two such strangers produced in court, and it was difficult to point out the slightest difference between them, even when the observer was prepared for the scrutiny, and had the opportunity of comparison. Lord Byron writing from Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1807, describes his encounter with one of these "doubles"—"Saw a girl at St. Mary's the image of Anne ***", thought it was her—all in the wrong—the lady stared, so did I,—I *blushed*, so did *not* the lady."‡

Of the power of poor Shelley's imagination upon his sight, the account given in the preface to the "Vampire" is a striking instance. That it was no fable we have Lord Byron's distinct evidence.

This evening vision was probably due to disordered digestive functions acting upon excited nerves, and a mind full of "the present horror of the time." Painfully vivid the impression must have been; and yet here the phantasms represented a plain impossibility. If such an effect can be produced by such an illusion, can we wonder that when the phantasms take the familiar form and features of those we love, when they are far away, and the appearance is accompanied by some distressing coincidence, the event sinks deep into the seer's soul?

Some years have now passed since the son of a merchant in the west of England had occasion to make a voyage to North America, for the

* Moore's Life.

† This invalid, a gentleman whose scientific attainments were of a high order, has died since the above was written.

‡ Moore's Life.

settlement of some affairs with that foreign branch of the house, leaving a sister in delicate health, but not absolutely an invalid, at home. He arrived safely, and was received under the roof of his brother, who managed the business in America. A few days after his arrival he made his appearance at the breakfast table with an aspect so woe-begone and haggard that his brother was alarmed : — “ You are not well,” said he; “ what is the matter ?”

“ Nothing : I am quite well in body.”

“ Then, brother, something has happened ; do not conceal it from me.”

There was a pause ; and then the elder born, looking stedfastly in his brother's face, said —

“ Mary is dead : I saw her last night !”

“ Our sister ?”

“ Yes.”

In vain did the younger brother reason with the elder upon the folly of giving way to such delusions. The solemn reply was — “ She is dead : I saw her and spoke with her at half past twelve last night.”

Finding all remonstrance vain, the younger noted the time, not with any belief in the fatal announcement ; but for the purpose of hereafter convincing his brother of the absurdity of yielding to such melancholy impressions.

The business which led the elder brother abroad having been transacted, he returned to England ; and when the ship that brought him home came to an anchor, his father's boat, in which was an old servant of the family, came alongside : he was in mourning.

“ How are my father and mother ?” hastily inquired the son.

“ Master and mistress are quite well, Sir, but —”

“ You need not go on ; my sister Mary is dead : she died on the —th” — naming the night and hour. And it was so.

Bishop Burnet, in his *Life of Lord Rochester*, gives the following account of that *presentiment* which has so often preceded death. The Earl of Rochester went to sea with Lord Sandwich in the winter of 1665, and was on board the *Revenge*, under the command of Sir Thomas Tiddiman, when the attack on the fort of Bergen in Norway, where the Dutch ships had taken shelter, was made. The attempt on the port is described as desperate, and the bravery of Rochester as distinguished during the whole action. In the same ship with him were Mr. Montague and another gentleman of quality. “ These two,” writes the bishop, “ the former especially, seemed persuaded that they should never return into England. Mr. Montague said ‘ he was sure of it :’ the other was not so positive. The Earl of Rochester, and the last of these, entered into a formal engagement, not without ceremonies of religion, that if either of them died, he should appear, and give the other notice of a future state, if there was any. But Mr. Montague would not enter into the bond. When the day came that they thought to have taken the Dutch fleet in the port of Bergen, Mr. Montague, though he had such a strong presage in his mind of his approaching death, yet he generally stayed all the

hile in the place of the greatest danger. The other gentleman signified his courage in a most undaunted manner, till near the end of the action; when he fell on a sudden into such a trembling that he could scarce stand: and Mr. Montague going to him to hold him up, as they were in each other's arms, a cannon-ball killed him outright, and carried away Mr. Montague's belly, so that he died within an hour after. The Earl of Rochester told me that these presages they had in their minds made some impression on him, that there were separated beings: and that the soul either by a natural sagacity, or some secret notice communicated to it, had a sort of divination: but that gentleman's never appearing was a great snare to him, during the rest of his life. Though when he told me this, he could not but acknowledge, it was an unreasonable thing for him to think, that beings in another state were not under such laws and limits, that they could not command their own motions, but as the Supreme Power should order them: and that one who had so corrupted the natural principles of truth as he had, had no reason to expect that such an extraordinary thing should be done for his conviction."

The writer in "Le Mercure Gallant," quoted in our second chapter, thus expresses himself upon the subject of these compacts: — "Souls do not take flight from their bodies to return to them, the tarrying-place being too indifferent for such spirits, however delightful it may be in young persons. If it were otherwise, I should have seen Pluside since her death. This beauty, of whom you have heard me say so much, had sworn to me, in the strength of our affections, one day on Easter, at the foot of the altar, that if she died before me, she would come and see me, and tell me all the news of the other state. I, also, made her the same promise, and sanctified it with an oath. Nevertheless many years have elapsed since she paid the debt of nature, without having accomplished what she owed to friendship and to her word."

I must now introduce my readers to a correspondent who seems to have honoured me by the perusal of my "Recollections;" and I take this opportunity of telling him how happy I shall be to hear from him again, as the conclusion of his letter leads me to hope I may.

DEAR MR. SHADDOE!

I, also, in my younger days have seen a ghost! I should say ghosts, for the apparition of *the two* haunted me many a night after my dreams; and though years have since passed away sufficiently busy and chequered to raze out the troublous impressions of a young brain, I can still sometimes trace the Protean incubus of a night-mare dream, or that first awful introduction to the *disembodied two*.

It happened during the probationary commencement of my apprenticeship — we called ourselves "pupils" — to a worthy country surgeon and apothecary. He stood high in the estimation of the good townsfolk and their wives, and was, moreover, surgeon to the county gaol. This imposing pile included all kinds of castellated architecture, and of all ages, from the square Roman tower and the baronial portcul-

lised gateway and keep of the early Plantagenets, to the fortress built in the time of Elizabeth, and to those more modern imitations erected in subserviency to the exigencies of a model-prison.

The old square tower, with walls that almost rivalled in thickness those of the pyramids,—“Hadrian’s tower,” it was called,—was divided by four or five stories into as many spacious but low-roofed apartments, which were accessible by a spiral stone staircase lodged in a corner turret of the tower: the uppermost room, the highest and most airy, was used as the hospital of the gaol. Here, indeed, we exercised privileges which the less-favoured surgeon’s pupils of the town could only hope to enjoy in their metropolitan career at the hospitals. The inquests holden over all the unfortunates who are liberated from prison by natural death gave us the opportunities of becoming early initiated in practical anatomy.

I eagerly embraced the first opportunity of this initiation, to which I looked forward, not without feelings of awe, such as might well mingle with the scientific aspirations of a youth of sixteen, but three weeks emancipated from an old-fashioned half-collegiate seminary, where supernaturalism had always flourished.

In my school days no youthful sceptic had ever ventured to raise a doubt as to the raising of the devil, by an ancient master’s goddess son, whose spell was the Lord’s prayer muttered backwards. Unbroken tradition pointed out the dark and slippery flag-stone in the centre alley of the old school-room, as the very spot where Old Nick sank with unsavoury odours, baffled by the wit of the young wizard who, when charged by the demon to find him employment on pain of being carried off, told him to make ropes of sand, *and knot them*.* Many a time my elder school-mates have pointed out to me, on the neighbouring sea-shore, the complicated coils of sand which the Prince of Darkness had been employing his leisure moments in twisting, but which were all sure to be unknotted and effaced by the next tide. Then, which of us on finding the dead-man’s bone in our trousers’ pocket, at bed-time, slily slipped in there by a mischievous playmate who had picked it up in the adjoining church-yard, did not draw his head under the bed-clothes, with expectant fear of the visitation of the ghostly claimant of the “plundered relic?”

The influence of these, and a score of school-myths of a kindred character, with a due reverence for Dr. Johnson’s opinion of ghosts, and the natural awe which the human corpse inspires, especially in the youthful mind, damped considerably, I must confess, my ardour for the acquisition of a knowledge of internal structure, when, the sheet having been withdrawn from the pale, cold, collapsed features of the deceased, the half-opened eyes seemed to deprecate what then struck me forcibly as being a desecration of the sanctity of the dead. It was in vain that my elder fellow pupil drew my attention to the

* Michael Scott, who “bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone,” conquered his indefatigable demon by setting him simply to make ropes of sea-sand. The “knotting,” was an additional difficulty reserved for the fiend evoked by Mr. Silas Seer’s precocious schoolfellow. — G. S.

various pathological signs in the thoracic viscera, which were learnedly descanted on by our master : my gaze would still turn to the pale, cold, collapsed features, and the glassy, staring eye-balls of the dead. He had been a young man, imprisoned for a term, and carried off by a rapid consumption. His was the first case that I had attended, and I had taken medicine to him in the hospital. Another prisoner, somewhat older, had died the day after, of some wasting disease ; and his body was examined the same day. These *post mortem* dissections were performed in the middle room of the old tower, where prison-clothes were washed. The corpses were to be interred next day. I quitted the scene with both appetite and ardour for science somewhat damped.

A few fever cases had broken out in the gaol, and I was charged to visit one that had reached a critical height late in the evening, with medicines, to be administered if certain symptoms were present. On this errand I set out about nine o'clock. It was late in November, and a storm was rising : large and dark masses of cloud were blown swiftly along, obscuring the light of a full moon, which now and then burst out from between them. I entered the gloomy arch of the old gateway tower, let fall the ponderous knocker, and, having been reconnoitred through a small grating, was admitted. The old turnkey, being apprised of my business, offered to accompany the "young doctor," in which title I already rejoiced, to the hospital tower. But as my seniors were accustomed to dispense with this attendance, I thought it *infra dig.* to require it : he might think I was afraid of going to the top of the old tower alone ; so, having obtained the keys and a lantern, I proceeded to the tower without him.

The storm seemed to be increasing in violence, and the clouds were collected and hurried on in blacker masses, as I crossed the spacious court-yard. The low portal of the turret, with the winding stairs, was in a distant and gloomy corner of the yard. I set down the lamp, to turn with both hands the heavy key in the stiff and creaking wards of the dark door ; but when the bolts had shot back, and I had resumed the lantern, the door resisted, as if pushed strongly from within ; and when, at length, it yielded suddenly to a harder push from without, I was met by such a gust, as if all the winds of heaven had been bound over to keep the peace that night, and were escaping from temporary confinement in that old tower. I stood for a moment with my back against the open door. The strange combination of howls, screams, and whistlings that smote my ear at the same time startled me, at first, with the idea that some human voices in the staircase were mingling with the sounds produced by the rushing of the wind. I stood, I say, for a moment, with my back against the open turret gate. The lantern had swung open with the effort of the first push, and the light was extinguished. As the sounds died away, I recognised that most melancholy and strangely articulate howling to which I had often in the day-time listened in the circular turret, which received, like a colossal organ-pipe, the currents of air that vibrated as they rushed in through four or five arrow-slits in its thick walls. The effect that a storm produced,

when, blowing strongly from the sea, about two miles distant, it beat against the walls of the old tower, and played upon and through this gigantic Æolian apparatus, is quite inconceivable.

When the storm had somewhat lulled, and I had time to collect my thoughts, my first idea was to return to the gateway for a light; but reflection whispered, "No, they'll think you were afraid to pass the corpse-room in the dark: besides, they might say, one can't miss his way up a narrow spiral staircase, and there was light enough to prevent his knocking his head against the iron gratings"—which, at each story, barred access to the stairs. So, swinging to again the heavy gate, and locking it,—the rule of the gaol being to lock every door that you passed through,—I proceeded to mount the long succession of stone stairs. The door had closed with a slam, that echoed to the summit of the stone well from the bottom of which I had to ascend. The loneliness of my position then first struck coldly upon me; when, having withdrawn the ponderous key, the winds, after a dead silence of a moment had succeeded the echoes of the closing door, began to play again their dismal concert of moans, howls, and screams, through those half-articulating arrow-slit apertures by which air and light were admitted to the stair-turret. In the murkiest gloom I began my ascent; and, arriving at the first grating, groped out the key-hole, unlocked the iron door, and passed through. This door I did not lock after me, but left wide open. I tried to whistle as I proceeded, but it seemed a mockery to attempt to make any sound heard amidst the indescribable crescendos and diminuendos of the unearthly moanings and howlings that filled that dismal access to the abodes of sickness and death. Yes!—then, as I slowly proceeded, my mind became suddenly and at once occupied—filled to the exclusion of every other idea—with the scene I had witnessed for the first time that morning—it came upon me so suddenly and distinctly that I involuntarily stopped: the picture of the whole procedure, with those features that had most appalled me, rose in hard outline before my mind's eye, and I tried again to reason and shake it off. "Men must be dissected," I said to myself: but something whispered that the mystery of the human frame was no fitting subject for the idle curiosity of a raw youth; and I could hardly acknowledge a better motive for my presence at that morning's scene. I wished I had never witnessed those pallid collapsed features.

Mr. Shaddoe, I then believed in ghosts: three or four of the best-authenticated cases, originating out of desecration of the corpse, vividly recurred to me; and, as these thoughts rapidly passed through my mind, every step I took was bringing me nearer the entry of that cold and dreary chamber where the mutilated corpses were waiting the hasty burial of the morrow. I had unlocked the second iron grating, which crossed the staircase, and having passed the abhorred chamber, was hastening on, when a slight gleam of light from above made me raise my head; and I saw, as I advanced a step in anxious scrutiny, knowing that the sick and their attendants were safe locked up in the upper ward,—I saw, I say, at the next turn above me a figure, at first indistinct, then in clear outline, tall and thin, leaning

against or clasping the central stone pillar of the staircase. The first alarm grew into a creeping and freezing horror, as, staring intently upwards, I made out by degrees the pale collapsed features, and those half-opened glassy eyes that had haunted me through the day, and now looked coldly down and met my own. I would have called for help, but I knew instinctively *that* would be in vain; and I commenced a precipitate descent, but had hardly made one turn down, and passed the closed door of the dead-chamber, when a second figure in white appeared below me, as if to intercept my passage: that figure, too, appeared to lean against or clasp the central stone column; and seemed to bear the features of the other corpse.

For an instant I grasped the pillar for support, and gazed upon the spectre in speechless terror. I had gone by the very spot but a few moments before, and no human being in the flesh could have stood and been passed unconsciously by me, where now the apparition, thin, pale and motionless, glared so clear and bright. A clattering like some one in chains rapidly descending or rushing down the staircase below me, and an unusually articulate howl above, made me start off in desperation. As I passed the lower ghost I felt something move — and found I had dragged a sheet after me.

This evidence of materiality recalled my scattered senses in some degree. I raised the sheet, and returning a few steps, saw the moon, that had broken out, gleaming brightly through one of the crucial arrow-slits upon the central stone pillar. I could see also where a nail, driven into a crevice of the stone-work, had been apparently used to suspend the sheet. I hung the sheet up again, and then saw how the upper round opening of the arrow-slit, pictured in bright moonlight upon the sheet, had made the head of the apparition; some folds of the sheet and an excited imagination having completed the ghastly physiognomy. Every trace of supernaturalism now vanished; I was excited even to laughter,—it was a wild hysterical burst of mirth,—and I then deliberately re-ascended to take a second and cool scrutiny of ghost number one. Here I found also that advantage had been taken of the current of air admitted by the arrow-slit, to hang up a sheet to dry on the opposite pillar. Here the moon gleaming through the upper dilatation of the vertical slit, made the head; and the short transverse slit the arm that seemed to clasp the columella. It really wanted but little imagination to complete the picture; every thing had concurred to prepare my mind to receive the supernatural interpretation of it.

I now found that in my second fright I had dropped the ponderous bunch of keys, which, clattering in their fall to the bottom of the well staircase, had added the horrors of inconceivable material chained activities to the spectral delusions. The moon again became obscured; I groped my way to the bottom, and picking up the fallen keys, unlocked the gate, and emerged with much joy into the open air of the court-yard.

The old turnkey, when I presented myself at the inner gate of the entrance tower, could not help asking, as he scrutinised my pale face by the light of his lamp, “what ailed me?” I made an indifferent

reply, returned him the keys and lantern, and passed out. My nervous system had received a severe shock, the effects of which were at once recognised by the family circle which I soon rejoined. I tried to laugh off the cause and place it in its true and ridiculous light, but for many consecutive nights my sleep was broken by disturbed and horrid dreams, in which the two pale corpses—my first subjects—figured as chief tormentors under various guises. I remember having mentally vowed while in my mortal agony never again to desecrate the Christian corpse, and to quit a profession that could be learnt only by practices so repugnant to the best feelings of one's nature.

I may tell you some day, Mr. Gideon, how this resolution was kept, and how another ghost-story, still current and religiously believed by the good gossips of the old town, arose out of the dilettante anatomizings in Hadrian's tower.

In the mean while I remain,

Your sympathising and admiring reader,

SILAS SEER.

SONNET TO A SONNET.

Particularly commended, with the Fifth of Sir Philip Sidney's, and the pages of Froissart, to the perusal of certain Journalists across the Channel; and generally to their *Young* countrymen, who would do well to affect, with the beards and moustaches of the olden time, the gallant courtesy of the ancient manners.

RARE Composition of a Poet-Knight,
 Most chivalrous amongst chivalric men,
 Distinguish'd for a polish'd lance and pen
 In tuneful contest, and the tourney-fight;
 Lustrous in scholarship, in honour bright,
 Accomplish'd in all graces current then,
 Humane as any in historic ken,
 Brave, handsome, noble, affable, polite,
 Most courteous to that race become of late
 So fiercely scornful of all kind advance,
 Rude, bitter, coarse, implacable in hate
 To Albion, plotting ever her mischance,—
 Alas! fair Verse, how false and out of date
 Thy phrase "*sweet enemy*" applied to France!

T. H.

THE BRACE OF BIRDS.

BY J. T. HEWLETT.

" See ! on the one hand, death
 Or disappointed hopes ;
 The other punishment,
 Disgrace ! I needs must choose.
 How to choose ? I know not." *Old Play.*

CHAPTER I.

THERE is something very interesting, nay, cheering, to an old sportsman on the approach of "the first." This term, "the first," is as clearly understood by every one, *qui sulphurea sustinet arma*, to mean the 1st of September, as the term "the Duke," is understood by every one to mean the hero of Waterloo. Hercules *ille*, the day — *the* man. The little prefix *the*, stamps the man and day with an unwithering celebrity. We might philosophise prolongedly on the advantages accruing to every one to whom the prefix is assigned, from the hero to the favourite *danseuse* of the season ; but we will not — we will merely say, that we have no doubt in our minds that Shakespeare wrote,

" We thank *the Jew* for teaching us that word,"

and not "*thee*, Jew," knowing as he must have done, presciently, that when once his play was read or acted, no other Jew than Shylock could be dreamed of as *the Jew* ; from his time down to the days of *a Jew* who figures in the pages of the cleverest novel of this day.

But a truce to philosophising. Let us "hye on" to our little tale.

Close to the borders of a large preserve, in the game-breeding county of Norfolk, stood a small farm-house with its snug convenient homestead. It was occupied by a new tenant, a respectable young man who had managed to save a sufficient sum from his wages as a bailiff or looker, to justify him in taking a farm of sixty acres by the year, and a young buxom lass of twenty summers as a wife, on a lease for the life of one of them ; what, I believe, the lawyers term a "lease of survivorship."

Arnold Dingly was bound in his agreement not to destroy, or permit to be destroyed, a single head of game on his lands, nor to use, or permit to be used, any gun, snare, net, or any other engine for the capture or destruction of a single rabbit. They, the rabbits, were the perquisites of the head keeper, who, although he was ordered to

keep them down, took care that sufficient should be left undestroyed to produce him a pretty little addition to his income.

Sampson Sharman, the head keeper of Erdleigh manor, was jealous of his rights and privileges, and did not fail to let the tenants know that any encroachments on them would be visited with the severest punishment which the law allowed. As he had nearly a dozen men under him, upon whom he could call at any hour, to assist him in capturing, and, if necessary, attacking poachers, all the tenants upon the manor were subjected to a system of *espionnage*, as effective as it was annoying, and so favourable was the light loamy soil of Erdleigh manor to the increase of that anti-malthusian vermin, the rabbit, that no one could keep a bit of parsley or a bunch of pinks in his garden. Even the tops of the carrots and parsnips disappeared long before their roots grew to maturity. It was very vexatious to the tenants, but what did Sampson care for that? every pair of rabbits with their skins on was worth twelve pence to him in the London market.

When the Dinglys came into the warren farm, it was just as the crops had been cleared off the land, about Old Michaelmas; and both Arnold and his wife were quite delighted at seeing the pheasants and hares coming in troops out of the neighbouring coverts, and strutting and tip-upping about before their very doors as tame as their own poultry; the partridges, too, would sun themselves in the ash-heap in the yard as coolly as if nobody ever meant to make game of them.

When, however, the young wheats and tares began to appear, and shortly after disappear under the ravages of the pretty pheasants and innocent hares, Arnold's face grew daily longer and longer, and he began to think that his farm was not so desirable a one, or so cheaply rented, as he had fancied it to be when he took it. He complained to the keeper, who merely smiled grimly, and told him that his orders were to "keep up the game," and that he should obey them. The bailiff "had nothing whatever to do with the game;" and when Arnold laid the case before his landlord, Mr. Oldstyle, one of the members for an adjoining borough, he was kindly assured, over a most excellent luncheon in the steward's room, that the notion of game injuring a farm was all a mistake; that it was better to have the young wheats eaten off lest they should grow too *frum* and "run to riband;" and that in case any damage should accrue, due compensation would be allowed when he came to pay his rent.

With this explanation and promise given in a bland, nay a kind, manner, Arnold was contented; and when a troop of gunners arrived from town and country for a *battue*—that unsportsmanlike slaughter of the innocents—and he heard some two thousand shots fired, his mind was quite easy; but when he saw in the country papers that at the *battue* at Erdleigh Manor, the well-stocked preserves of Squire Oldstyle had afforded their well-known superior sport, and that 800 pheasants, 500 hares and rabbits, 200 brace of birds, and 1 woodcock had been killed in two days, he was really afraid that the game would be extirpated and his landlord deprived of future sport(?). He did not know the game-breeding qualities of Norfolk nor the game-preserving abilities of the Norfolk keepers. He had never examined

the statistics of the county to ascertain how many of its rural population passed a few months yearly in its gaol for offences against the game-laws, nor how many perished in conflicts with keepers, nor how many keepers were foully murdered in the execution of their duties. He had not the least notion, how many beer-shops had been opened in snug out-of-the-way places since the passing of *the act*, which were supported entirely by those whose ignorance was so great of the nature of *meum* and *tuum*, that they could not be persuaded that game was not mere "wild animals," and their own property if they could shoot, net, suffocate, or entrap it. Arnold Dingly knew none of these facts, although they had been laid upon the table of the House at the request of some Honourable Member, printed in folio blue books, and even sold as waste paper to the butter-shops. But, says some Honourable Member, "He ought to have known it—the *returns* moved for were printed, published, and circulated." Alas! the only *returns* that Arnold knew any thing about were those which he put into his vespertinal pipe, and which, like the Honourable Member's *returns*, ended in smoke.

Arnold Dingly was too poor a man, and, as a mere cultivator of sixty acres, too insignificant an individual to associate with the large and wealthy farmers around him. He could not afford to spend two shillings for dinner and five shillings for a bottle of wine after it at the market ordinary on market-days, so that he had no opportunity of learning from his brethren of the plough and harrow their opinions of the "chances of the game" doing him great or little injury, and at the one agricultural meeting which he attended nothing was said about the game except by one gentleman, an exchanger of game for fish and venison with a London poulterer, who "looked upon the licensed sale of game as a great boon and preventive of poaching," and another, who said "that he had ascertained from a most scientific chemist that the *bumbles* of hares and rabbits and the *juggings* of partridges were fully equal in efficacy to the best foreign guano,"—*ergo*, game was to be preserved.

CHAPTER II.

SPRING came and then summer, and before harvest Arnold Dingly's corn-fields were drilled in all directions by the hares in forming themselves meuses. Under every hedge-row for some two or three yards not an ear of corn was to be seen; the rabbits had taken care of them. The beans and peas, as soon as they were ripe, were preyed upon by the pheasants and wood-pigeons, and the seed-clover cut but a very sorry appearance. He heartily wished he had taken a farm far away from a preserve, but he bottled up and revoked the sigh that rose from the recesses—the cellar—of his bosom, when he thought of the promise made him that he should be fully compensated for his losses when his rent became due, though he had some doubts in his mind about the manner in which his losses were to be justly appraised. About the middle of August the crop was cut and gathered;

and the little homestead or rick-barton certainly gave no outward signs of the good farming of its tenant by the number and size of its stacks.

It happened that, when harvest was over, about two days before "the first," business called Arnold to a distant town. As his wife, for family reasons, was not in a state to bear the joltings of a market-cart as his companion, he saddled one of his Suffolk punches, a steady old waggon-horse, and set out by himself. The sale by auction which he went to attend as a purchaser of a few implements was not over until late. The sun had set when he mounted his nag; and as he had about fifteen miles to travel on a slow heavy beast, he did not stop to take any refreshment, but made up his mind to recruit himself and rest his nag at a small retired alehouse which he had observed as he passed it in the morning.

He jogged on but not merrily, for his purchases had nearly exhausted his little store sadly reduced before by the payment of harvest-work. Still he jogged on, and getting hungry in spite of sad thoughts, wished that the alehouse might present itself to his eyes at every turning of the road. At length he came to the common, at the further side of which, under a wide and lofty covert, he remembered it stood. It was then dark. There was no moon to "give her light in the heavens that night," and a heavy dew spread itself over the lowlands and hung suspended among the trees and hedge-rows. Arnold quitted the hard road for the turf by its side, thinking it would be softer and pleasanter for his horse's feet. Thus he approached "The Horse Shoes" in silence, and was about to dismount to enter its doors, after tying his nag to the water-trough, when the sound of voices as of some quarrelling, and others in boisterous merriment, reached his ears.

Arnold kept his seat and listened. He was not afraid of being robbed, for he had paid away nearly all his money at the auction; he was not afraid of being beaten, for he was powerful and possessed of great courage: but he thought he might be insulted if he appeared suddenly among a set of men who had evidently been drinking, and rendered quarrelsome by their drink.

He heard sundry snatches of song; but as several chose to sing their own songs on their own account at the same time, the jingling of tunes and words was any thing but harmonious. At last a voice, louder than the rest, struck up an old and well-known poaching song, and every other voice suddenly chimed in with

"It's my delight on a shiny night,
In the season of the year."

Hungry and thirsty as he was, Arnold was upon the point of pulling his horse's head from the trough out of which it had been drinking, and moving on; but at the moment one of the shutters of the drinking room was thrown open, as if to give the inmates a little fresh air; and he could not help listening to the conversation that followed the shouts and rappings on the table with which the ditty was applauded.

"That's the music for me," said one.

"D—n the music, the words is what I approves on—it's the very sentiment of the thing," said another, letting his fist fall heavily on the table.

"I'll give you a t-t-oast," said a third, in the stammering tones of drunkenness. "Here's confusion to all keepers, and may their guns bust to p-p-ieces every time they lets 'm off."

"Bravo!—hurrah!" shouted all.

"And I'll give you another toast, my boys," cried a fourth. "Here's a short gun, a stout cudgel, and a strong arm; and may all the squires and their keepers be ————" The terms of the toast are too horrible to be written.

Arnold's blood turned cold as he heard the joyous shout with which this toast was received.

"But to business," said one of the previous speakers. "Are all the baskets packed ready for Jem Waggoner? he will soon be here."

"All ready—sixty brace safely stowed away and covered with eggs and straw," replied another.

"How much a brace are we to pouch this season?" asked a deep, gruff-speaking fellow.

"Only a shilling," said the first speaker, "and garnish out of that for the landlord here; but we must be satisfied; as, thanks to that d——d sale of game bill, every d——d gentleman sells his game and spoils our market. It was not so in former times; squires were too proud to turn poulterers."

"And they are stricter and harsher than ever now, with a poor fellow who tries to turn an honest penny by catching a partridge or a hare. They find they can make a profit of it themselves, instead of giving it away to their friends and tenants," said another.

"Well, here's b—t all gentlemen poulterers," said the first voice, which elicited another shout, and fresh calls for "jugs round."

"Where do we meet to-morrow night?" asked the man of business.

"It's Squire Oldstyle's turn next. If we could only get that sober muff Dingly to make one of us, we could make a fortune off the warren, it lies so snug and handy."

"Let's try him—he's eat up with the game."

"It's of no use at present; let us wait and see how he looks when he comes to pay his rent, and finds twenty or thirty *bobs* returned to him for damage done to twenty or thirty pounds' worth of corn. Ah! ah! ah! He'll come over to us some day and *take* his own; as it is but fair he should do."

"Ware hawk! at the squire's," said the man of business; "that Sampson Sharman's a devil incarnate, and would no more mind shooting a poor fellow than he would a pheasant. Curse him! he'll rue it one day."

"I believe him to be a poacher himself; the coachman and he haint so thick as they be for nothing."

Arnold Dingly had heard enough to convince him of the characters of the men who were enjoying themselves in the little parlour of the

Horse Shoes. He quietly removed himself and his horse from the neighbourhood of the public-house, and trotted on towards his home.

About midway from the place he had just left and the warren farm was another house, not a Tom and Jerry, as a mere beer shop is called, but a regular magisterially licensed public. There, for coaches still ran in that part of England, did the two day coaches and the mail pull up to change horses.

At this house Arnold did not mean to stop, hungry as he was, for it was not so very far from his own as to justify him in doing so; but just before he reached it his horse cast one of his fore-shoes, and as the blacksmith's shop was at hand he dismounted, gave him to the ostler to get him shod, and entered the bar parlour. It was now quite dark without, and candles were lighted within: two or three persons were in the parlour taking refreshment, previously to the arrival of the up-mail, in which they hoped to obtain places. Arnold sat down and helped himself to some of the dishes before him, and then retired to the larger room in front to enjoy one pipe and a tankard, while his nag's shoe was being fitted. The room was nearly empty; and as the night was warm, he seated himself near an open window which commanded a view of the stables, and of that part of the house opposite to which the coaches drew up to change horses. The space was lighted by a large oil lamp suspended to the sign-post, and another over the entrance door.

Where Arnold Dingly sat he could see, but not be seen by those without. He fancied he saw one of the stable doors cautiously opened now and then, when the sound of wheels was heard, as if by some one who was listening for the mail. It was not the ostler; for he was visible at the door of the smithy, watching the shoeing of the nag. It was not the helper; for he was lounging against the sign-post flicking an imaginary horse with an imaginary four-horse whip, and whistling and cherrupping to a team he fancied he was driving. It did not much matter to Arnold who it was; but the stealthy motions of the man excited his curiosity, and he could not help watching him.

At length a horn was heard—that plain tin instrument, which, like the harp on Tara's walls, now “hangs mute,” and is superseded by a steam-whistle—and in all the glory of former days, the mail was pulled up at the door by its *crack* driver, who threw the reins on the backs of his steaming and tail-shaking wheelers, chucked his whip to the helper, and dismounted from his box.

At this moment Arnold saw the man who had excited his curiosity by his stealthy movements come out of the stable with a large basket. It was evidently heavy-laden, for it was with some difficulty that the guard could lift it upon the roof of the coach. When he had done so he threw a cloth over it, jumped from the coach, and shook the man who had given the basket to him heartily by the hand. After whispering together a short time, the guard left the man, saying, “Wait half a second until I've made up the way-bill, and I will bring it out to you.”

In a few minutes he came out again, followed by the maid who was carrying some hot mixture in her hand. Arnold saw the guard count

some money into the stranger's hand, and heard a remonstrance that "it ought to have been more," and a reply that "the times wouldn't afford it." Then the glass, of whatever it was, was taken from the maid. The guard took a fair share of it, and handed it to the other. As this individual raised his head to drain the glass, the light of the lamp fell upon his face, and disclosed to Arnold the features of Sampson Sharman, the keeper, which had been hidden by the brim of a large straw hat. Arnold recollected the observation he had heard at the Horse Shoes, and felt convinced that the basket just put upon the mail contained a liberal supply of game for the London market. He knew it did not hold rabbits, for they were sent up openly three days a week by the road-waggon. Sampson, too, was disguised in a straw hat and a round or smock-frock, and evidently did not wish to be known. However, it was no business of Arnold's, so he left the window, paid his reckoning, and went out to seek his nag, which had been shod and put into the stable.

Arnold's nag was a quiet nag enough; but just as he was brought out of the stable, the guard gave a flourish on his horn to warn the driver and passengers that his time was up. Unused to music, or disliking it, the old horse backed; and, after a loud terrified neigh or two, commenced kicking out behind; and, in one of its flings, struck Sampson Sharman on the leg as he was crossing from the coach towards the stable where he had previously been concealed. He muttered "curses not loud but deep" against the brute that had hurt him, and tried to limp into the stable; but, before he could reach it he fell, and Arnold feared his leg was broken. The mail drove off at the moment, and Arnold shouted for help. The ostler and helper came up with their lanterns, and Arnold told them to take up Mr. Sharman, the keeper of Erdleigh Manor, and carry him in-doors, while he rode for a doctor.

"Curse the doctor, and the horse, and you too," groaned out Sampson; "leave me alone, I shall be right in a few minutes."

"It is I, sir, Arnold Dingly, of the Warren; shall I borrow a cart, put the old horse in, and drive you home?"

"No, no—thank you—no," said Sampson rising. "The pain is going off now—I can get home very well; and mark you—say nothing about this little accident, nor any thing else you may have seen or heard."

"The basket and the sovereigns—eh?" whispered Arnold; "but I never interfere in such matters."

Sampson muttered something, but Arnold got upon his now quiet nag and rode off. As he passed a gateway, about a hundred yards from the inn, his nag began neighing, and was answered by another horse. Arnold pulled up, and rode to the spot whence the sound came, and saw a pony and cart fastened to a gate by the pony's bridle. He rode on, however, and just as he reached the turning of the road which led to the keeper's house, the cart passed him, and a voice which he knew to be Sampson's urged the pony to its full speed as it turned the corner.

"Goodnight," shouted Arnold, who was riding on the turf under the shade of the hedge-row which skirted the road.

The cart was instantly stopped, and Sampson called out to Dingly who rode up to its side.

"I was looking out for you, Mr. Dingly," said Sampson, "but missed you in the dark, and concluded you were on further forward. You said something about baskets and sovereigns: now, for fear of mistakes, I beg you to know that the basket only contained poultry and eggs, and that they were my own property, that I had a right to dispose of as I pleased."

"Well, well," said Dingly, "it's no business of mine, and I shall not say any thing about it. I'm no spoil-game, I assure you. Good night." Arnold laughed and rode on, not knowing that he had made an enemy, and one not likely to forget and forgive.

CHAPTER III.

MICHAELMAS came, and the rent-day with it. The Squire was at a distant manor shooting, and the lawyer presided to receive the rents and entertain the tenants afterwards. When it came to Dingly's turn to be admitted into the justice room he laid his money on the table, and when Mr. Sharpe, the lawyer, had counted it and pronounced it perfectly right, he demanded the compensation for the loss caused by the game which had been promised him.

"Oh! certainly, Mr. Dingly, certainly; we are very liberal in those matters. We allow 5*l.* per centum for damage done to crops. Your rent is 90*l.*—30*s.* per acre, and here are 4*l.* 10*s.* which you will find exactly right," said Mr. Sharp, placing four sovereigns and a half before the astonished tenant.

"But, sir, I assure you this will not be a fourth of what I have lost—indeed 40*l.* would not compensate me fully—you have not a notion——"

"Oh yes I have," said Sharpe, nodding very knowingly, "oh! yes, I have—that if you are discontented at receiving the same as all the other tenants, you can quit your farm as soon as you please. We shall have plenty of applicants, I assure you."

"But, sir, Mr. Oldstyle told me that I should not be a loser of a penny, and if you will only let any of my neighbours survey my farm and put an estimate on my losses, you will find——"

"We do nothing of the sort, sir: we go upon principle, and consider five per cent. a sufficient remuneration," said Mr. Sharpe, frowning. "If Mr. Oldstyle was at home I am sure he would act upon my advice, so good morning, Dingly; take up your compensation money and your receipt, and send in some one else—Good morning."

"I'll write to the Squire," said Arnold, "and see what he says about it. He is called an honourable man, and if he is so he will keep his word."

"A mere waste of time, pen, ink, and paper, rely upon it; be advised, and say no more about it, or you may have notice to quit instead of further compensation. Good morning, Dingly, we shall see you at dinner of course."

Arnold Dingly was vexed at his disappointment, but more so at the lawyer's coolness, who waved him out of the room with a flourish of his pen. He would not stay to dinner, but walked off home, and while his indignation was hot upon him, wrote a strong letter to his landlord, and posted it himself. In two days he received a very short answer, referring him to Lawyer Sharpe for redress, who "took all the trouble in such matters off Mr. Oldstyle's hands."

Arnold had a great mind to throw up his farm immediately, but he could not. What was he to do? Where was he to go, if he did? Besides these difficulties, the immense sacrifice he must make if he sold off his stock and implements by auction, and had his sown lands valued. There was another serious *hitch*. Mrs. Dingly was upon the point of being confined, and was very unwell and incapable of moving from her room. So Arnold determined to continue a tenant, and to talk to his landlord as soon as he should return home. He took especial care not to mention his vexation, or the cause of it, to his wife, for fear it should harass her and deprive him of his warmest hope — a child, as a pledge of the affection he believed she entertained for him.

"Dingly," said the parish doctor, who was engaged to attend on Mrs. Dingly in her confinement, "your wife is really ill, but I am not afraid of the result. She must have any little thing she fancies, however expensive it may be. It will not be long that you will have to indulge her fancies, and you are too good a fellow to deny her any thing. Medicines are of no use to her, and I should only be cheating you if I drenched her with drugs. Let her have what she fancies, get the nurse in the house, and send for me as soon as she says I am wanted."

Off rode the honest apothecary, and Arnold sought his wife's chamber to find out what little dainty would tempt her appetite.

"There is only one thing, dear Arnold, that I seem to wish for," said his wife.

"Say the word, Jane, and if it is gold you can eat you shall have it."

"Oh, no! — it is nothing very expensive, nor difficult to be obtained: it is only a brace of birds. I should enjoy a roasted partridge above all things."

Arnold kissed his wife, and promised she should have a brace of birds for dinner next day. He walked over to the keeper's, and asked him to give him a brace; telling him the purpose for which he wanted them.

Sampson Sharman told him that his orders were that not a bird should be killed until his master returned at the end of October.

Arnold thought of the basket and the sovereigns, but said nothing. He went to two or three neighbours; but they were not allowed to sport, and could not oblige him. There was no place licensed to sell

game in the neighbourhood; but Arnold bethought him of what he had heard at the Horse Shoes, and doubted not, if he managed well, that he could purchase a brace of birds there "on the sly." He remounted his nag, and rode over. It was mid-day, and no one was in the house but the landlady. Arnold made his wishes known to her. She shook her head and declared she did not know how to help him, for that they had been in trouble about game, and had nothing to do with it any longer. Arnold offered her a sovereign for a brace; but she resolutely refused it, declaring it was as much as her life was worth to accept it, without her husband's knowledge. "But," said she, "you live at the Warren, don't you? I have heard that you are eaten up with game there."

Arnold told her that he had been a loser of a considerable sum by the damage done to his crops.

"Then you can easily get what you want — a shot will never be noticed, if you only mind what you are about. Be up early, and keep a sharp look-out; then shoot into a covey on the ground."

Arnold smiled at this, his first lesson in poaching, but resolved to try at the inn where the mail stopped before he profited by it. He was as unsuccessful there as he had been at the Horse Shoes, and rode home to tell his wife of his failure in making good his promise. She bade him go to bed and think no more about it; but Arnold saw, in spite of her attempts to conceal it, that she was grievously disappointed.

He rose before it was light, and loaded an old gun that he kept to scare rooks with. He knew that a fine covey of birds, as tame as barn-door fowls, came to feed every morning in a stubble close to his garden. As soon as it was light enough he looked over the hedge, and there, sure enough, he saw them feeding. He waited until two of them were close together, put up his gun, and fired. Away flew the rest, leaving two struggling on the ground. He put his gun down, leapt over the hedge, and picked them up, delighted at his success. When he had examined the birds, and was putting them into his pockets, a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice which he knew to be the private property of Sampson Sharman, said —

"Well shot, farmer; this will be a job for Lawyer Sharpe; but I will trouble you for those birds. You know the law authorises me to take them from you."

"You may inform against me, if you please; and I shall have something to say against you — recollect the basket and the sovereigns — but you know why I wanted these birds, and I do not mean to part with them," said Arnold.

"By —, I'll have them," said Sampson, gnashing his teeth, and seizing Arnold by the collar.

"Unhand me, scoundrel! I am willing to pay what the law demands, but I will not be insulted," said Dingly, as he tried to shake himself free. "You will not quit your hold, you malignant fellow; then take that:" and with a blow of his powerful arm he struck Sampson to the ground, with the loss of two very large front teeth.

Sampson rose, spat the blood from his mouth, and seizing his gun

by the barrel, was about to attack the young farmer, when a voice shouted out, "Fair play, keeper, fist to fist."

"Will White! You poaching rascal; what do you do here?" said the keeper.

"Never you mind that — lay down your gun, if you be a man, and have a fair fight — but no using of butt-ends. Stand up, farmer; I'll see fair play."

Sampson, however, declined a fight, and threatening both his rivals with the vengeance of Lawyer Sharpe, walked off.

Arnold had recognised in Will White the voice of the man of business whom he had heard at the Horse Shoes, and was not much pleased at the recognition. He could do no less, however, under the circumstances, than ask him to take some refreshment. He told him the cause of the quarrel with the keeper, and the old poacher only laughed at him, and told him he would be fined, but might soon pay the fine at his landlord's expense if he would follow his advice.

Arnold declined following it; but thanked him for his timely aid, and dismissed him. He said nothing to his wife about what had occurred, but merely told her he had got what she so much wished for. Her eyes sparkled with pleasure; and when the birds were dressed, ate of them so heartily, that Arnold snapped his fingers at the price he should have to pay for them. His wife was confined that very night, bore it very well, and presented him with a chopping boy. The doctor attributed her "excellent time" to the brace of birds.

CHAPTER IV.

"WHAT have you to say in answer to this information?" said Lawyer Sharpe, acting as magistrates' clerk, to two "gentlemen poulterers."

Arnold told his tale.

The "gentlemen poulterers" said it was a clear case; and Arnold was fined for destroying two partridges under one Act, and then fined more heavily under another Act for "sporting without a license." He was, however, graciously allowed a fortnight, in which he was to get the money to pay the fines. The surveyor of taxes, too, gave him a hint that he would be surcharged for a certificate.

Sampson Sharman received the thanks of the "gentlemen poulterers" for his vigilance, and was about to retire, grinning vindictively at his victim, when Arnold begged to be allowed to tell something which had come to his knowledge. He was graciously allowed to tell all he had heard and seen at the Coach Inn, and then told to produce his witnesses. He had none to produce. Sampson Sharman said it was all a lie, merely spoken out of revenge; and the "gentlemen poulterers" told him "he left the court without a stain on his character."

Arnold Dingly left the game-selling justices and Lawyer Sharpe with a black speck on his heart. He felt that, although he had done wrong, he had been hardly dealt by. The sneers of the keeper, too,

"told upon him." He was not a drinking man; but, upon this occasion, he went into the tap of the inn in which the Petty Sessions were held, and ordered a bumper of brandy and water. He was not alone, for Will White and several others came in to condole with him on the harsh treatment he had met with. When he left the house at ten that night, he was driven home—in a state of intoxication.

When Mrs. Dingly was well enough to come down stairs, and resume the duties of the house, she was surprised to find an alteration in all her husband's habits. He had always some one with him in the day-time, and was out the greater part of the night. She found, too, nets and bits of wire, sticks of sulphur, and other things of which she could not imagine the use. Dingly, too, was changed, although he was kind to her and the child. He drank more than she had ever known him drink before, and of stronger drinks; neglected his farm, and talked frequently of the tyranny of landlords and the iniquity of the game laws.

When she expostulated with him, he bade her mind her own business, and not interfere with him. She obeyed him. Without seeming to do so, she watched all his proceedings closely; for she feared something, but she knew not what.

Will White was at the farm almost daily, and often brought two or three men with him, as rough and uncouth as himself. They sat until it was dark smoking and drinking; and, when they went away, generally took Arnold with them, who did not return home until near daybreak, and generally in a state of intoxication. He seemed, however, in spite of his neglect of business, to have plenty of money; but, instead of giving it to her to put by, as he had hitherto done, he kept it about his person. She was fidgetty and uneasy, though she could not tell why. She had an undefinable feeling that the money was not obtained honestly.

One night, about the close of November, when the nights were intensely dark, her husband left the house about ten o'clock with some half dozen men, whom Will White had brought with him. Some suspicion induced her to watch the party after they left the house; and she saw them, by the lantern which her husband carried under the pretence of lighting them over the brook, go into the cart-stables. When they came out each had a gun in his hand, and a sack on his arm, and carried something in his hand which looked very much like the nets she had seen about the house of late. She was very much frightened, but did not know how to act. She was fully convinced that her husband had fettered himself to a band of poachers; but, as she knew nothing of his having been prosecuted and fined for having satisfied her wish for game, she could not imagine any cause for the course he was evidently pursuing. She closed the house, and went to bed. She tried to sleep, but could not. She was restless and miserable. All at once she started at the reports of several guns in the covert adjoining their land. She sprang out of bed, opened the window, and listened. Again the guns were heard; then voices in altercation, the baying of dogs, curses, and loud

ata, followed by the crashing of boughs. She thrust her body as
as she could out of the window, and heard two shots fired almost
re same moment, succeeded by a shriek so fearful that she closed
casement, kissed her sleeping child, and rushed down stairs to
rtain the cause of what she heard.

With the speed of a doe she flew across the one field which sepa-
d the house from the covert. A spring enabled her to clear the
e; and, directed by the gleams of a dark lantern, she found her
to an open spot in the wood. A crowd of men formed a ring
nd some object—silent as death. She forced her way through
a, and on the green sward she saw Sampson Sharman and her
and lying, shot to death!

: was a dear price to pay for A BRACE OF BIRDS!



"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

THE RUINED HUMAN DWELLING.

I.

I SOUGHT this spot in boyhood's bloom,
This ruin'd human dwelling :
When in my breast there was no gloom
Man's brightest hopes repelling.
I thought of knights and knightly worth
Through every country speeding :
No wrong left unredress'd on earth —
No human bosom bleeding.
I then would know of nothing sad,
Do nothing that was vicious :
Of vivid life, the bounding pulse —
The feeling was delicious.
To me did our poor life appear
A sun-like march, a bright career,
In god-like deeds excelling :
A moon, a sun, were love and truth : —
In the omnipotence of youth,
I trod this ruin'd dwelling.

II.

Here, too, I came in manhood's prime :
A fair foot with me paced it ;
And in our bosoms was a clime,
All brightness, that embraced it.
Bright through it stream'd from orient skies
Sweet light to us beholden,
For Love shed on it from our eyes
A lustre far more golden.
We talk'd of lovers here immured,
Of knightly lances shiver'd ;
Of Beauty long here suffering wrong,
By Valour hence deliver'd.
How soft her hand in mine ! her step
How like a young roe's bounding !
A palace seem'd this ruin old,
The region, Heaven, surrounding !

The Past was by the Present cheer'd,
 All-brighten'd our to-morrows :
 How very light to us appear'd
 The darkest human sorrows !
 • Our life to come had amplest scope
 For tales of Fancy's telling :
 With what a world of Love and Hope,
 We trod this ruin'd dwelling !

III.

In the dark lapse of after days,
 Autumnal-time ensuing,
 I mark'd where stream'd youth's golden rays,
 Through this sad human ruin.
 With alter'd pace, I trod the place,
 To my past life attending ;
 And unto me like mournful grace
 The light of song was lending.
 The old grey walls of crumbling stone,
 In common light seen only :
 With mournful ivy overgrown —
 Sad court, and terrace lonely :
 How strange ! In youth no echo sad
 Woke in these ruins hoary :
 The very air and light were glad,
 Imbued with former glory !
 Now all is dim, and blank, and cold, —
 And Truth, sad Truth, is telling,
 'Twas Youth lent grace to this old place,
 This ruin'd human dwelling.

SMUGGLER LIFE.

BY THE MOUNTAINEER.

GRAFENSTEIN, one of the many possessions of Count Clam-Gallas, opened to us its bright and hospitable gates. Situated upon an insulated hill, at whose foot the impetuous Neisse roars, the fair castle of Grafenstein commands a noble and extensive prospect. Upon one side she gazes upon the swelling hilly scenery of Saxony; upon the other rise the romantic mountains of Bohemia. The adjacent road to Reichenberg gives life to the spot, and attracts not only commercial travellers to these parts, but others who have a love for natural beauty, and who acknowledge themselves well paid for their repeated visits.

When we had sufficiently gratified our sight with the splendid appointments of the courtly building we withdrew to the neighbouring inn, our minds full of the glories of the past, of which the castle of Grafenstein still presents a memorable record. The greater part of the fertile territory over which Count Clam-Gallas now rules stood two hundred years ago under the dominion of the mysterious Wallenstein. There are few hides of land about the Saxon borders untrodden by this dreaded duke; few upon which he did not leave the impressions of his master spirit. My companion and I, absorbed in a discourse respecting this great yet enigmatical personage, failed to remark that the common room in which we sat was by degrees filling with guests. A pause in our conversation drew our attention to the circumstance, and then we perceived that our new comers were gentlemen whose exterior was by no means favourable to the raising of our confidence and esteem. Twenty, or more, tall, but at the same time broad-shouldered and bulky figures, such as are indigenous to the dense forests of the Bohemian frontier, were sitting at a table drinking beer, and talking in an under-tone of secrecy, although they seemed to convey their meaning to one another rather by looks and signs than words. Their dress was very simple and very striking. They wore, for the most part, breeches of coarse linen or dark leather, a short jacket of light cloth or faded velvet, and heavy clouted boots; a mean bonnet, or an ill-shaped beaver, partly concealed the suspicious-looking face, in which, however, small piercing eyes were fixed, that sparkled like so much fire; staves, of the size of a man, and at least two inches thick, armed at one end with iron, and blunted at the other, apparently to enable the holder to climb the mountain with greater facility, were lying, some against the wall, some heaped together upon stools and benches. Many of the visitors carried, likewise, long whips, twisted sash-wise about the hips and shoulders, and,

instead of a belt, large and heavy money-pouches. The dark chesnut complexion of these men bore witness to their unsettled wandering life; and their shy mistrustful looks led you at once to believe that the whole company were neither more nor less than so many members of a band of thieves. This unkind supposition, however, received no countenance from the unreserve and natural heartiness to which all resigned themselves as soon as they were satisfied that none was present from whom they had reason to fear any treachery or ill-will. Heated by their beer, they soon became more talkative, condescended even to share in our discourse, and permitted us to join them in a game of skittles,—a diversion practised on the borders of Bohemia perhaps with greater skill than in any other corner of this gamesome world.

The men were Bohemian smugglers and cattle-dealers—two classes uniting savageness with daring intrepidity. Smuggling and cattle-dealing are, indeed, often carried on simultaneously, or the one occupation is quitted for the other. The wretch whose poverty and ill-luck have deprived him of every honest means of making his way in life clutches at the perilous and deadly business of a smuggler with the same love of existence as a drowning man catches at a straw. If in this trade he has luck from Providence, and prudence from himself, he exchanges, as soon as he is able, the iron stick for the whip, quits the borders, passes through the forests towards Moravia, and after some months steps into Hungary, where he looks about for cattle. The journey is, at times, extended to Wallachia. His purchases are sold on the road, and he will many times return for a fresh stock before he thinks of visiting his home again; which, when he does visit, he comes, indeed, a wealthier man to the native soil, but more intractable in spirit than ever, more immoral, a greater foe to all government and order. The unbridled life which he has spent in forest and wilderness amongst men—themselves barbarians—has extinguished entirely the spark of civilisation, which, at the best, glimmered but very faintly in the unhappy creature.

Property renders such people headstrong. A sort of experience of the world, a false knowledge of mankind, make them haughty and highflown. Physical strength, improved in dangers and storms, disposes them to fight and brawl, and to hate peace. There are many with a dark history at their hearts—if the heart dared speak its reveries, or the tongue had courage to loosen. It is said that Bohemian cattle-dealers never die in peace; and that after a certain period of life they fall into a gloomy melancholy and mute madness. I do not know if the saying is true; but this I will aver—a company of Bohemian cattle-dealers has something demon-like about it; and I was never even able to sit in the midst of one without a chilliness of blood which I found it difficult to shake off.

The smugglers are more inoffensive, perhaps, than the cattle-dealers; yet they are bold and fearless men. They are, if such an expression may be used respecting them, strictly honest in their dealings: they work for poor wages; and they risk their miserable lives daily for the rich and unseen employer who maintains them. Pro-

voked, they know no mercy, and become dangerous. Their unholy vocation engenders a wild licentiousness; and, if it once comes to blows, they acknowledge no medium between slaying and being slain.

I made acquaintance with one or two of the youngest smugglers, and invited them to partake of our cheer. I gathered from these that the whole party was on the point of starting for "the little town," as Zittau is generally styled by the Bohemians. The object was to smuggle twenty waggon-loads into the province of Bohemia.

"We are three hundred strong," said my informant, and we shall pass the borders by ten different ways. The officers have hit upon our track, and are smelling about like so many greyhounds. They shall be cheated yet—the rascals! and, if they don't mind what they are about, get their noses flattened into the bargain, so that their scent shall not be worth much for the future!"

My companion inquired more particularly into the nature of their proceedings. The smuggler made no secret of the matter, but went on to relate many adventures in which he had sustained an important character, and in all of which great courage and dexterity were exhibited on the part of the actors.

"But all that's nothing," said he, concluding his narrative—"nothing at all compared with our present undertaking. Since the tariff-union the inspectors at the borders have become inflexible. There are no less than three rows of them, and they stand not a gun-shot apart. Bribery won't answer any longer: and if even one of them looks like an honest man, he is not to be trusted. No conscience can stick under their dirty grey coats. The only way now is to spread false reports of our movements, and so gain time. Once get the waggons over, and in a quarter of an hour the goods are divided, and slipped by a thousand ways further into the country!"

"How do you contrive, then," I asked, "to draw the watchmen off the scent this time?"

"Oh! there's Nicholas Andrè in the defile below. That man has the tact of a general. Have you never heard of him? He is a nimble lad, I can tell you—as strong and as brave as a lion, with as pretty a sweetheart as ever you looked upon. Nicholas can disguise himself like a play-actor, and pull the grey-coats by the nose whichever way he pleases. He has managed to decoy the birds off, and they are waiting patiently enough at *Buchanelstein*. The pass is free as far as *Freudenhöhe*; and if we are not detained there we shall be all right. It will be a god-send for poor Nicholas. He has been long sick of this work, and longs to settle down quietly with his darling. If we succeed, he is to have a handsome present from our employer, and a situation at the factory at *Hammerstein*. We have all enough to do. It is tooth-and-nail work for poor people, if they wish to keep from the gallows."

There was a general rattling of the iron-tipped sticks. The landlord stopped the game at nine-pins, the smugglers stood up, and all prepared for departure. One of the stoutest laid his bony hand upon the shoulder of my friend, the informant.

"You are a babbling fool, Francis!" said he. "Learn to keep a silent tongue within your head, if you would not have me teach you!"

The gigantic man raised his staff, and sent it whizzing round his fingers over the head of my young acquaintance.

"I know the gentlemen, cousin," replied the lad. "They won't split upon us. They know better!"

As he spoke, the youthful smuggler offered us his hand, which we accepted, and shook heartily. We compelled the older man to do the like, and then his brow grew serene again, and he dismissed his suspicion.

"Which is your road, gentlemen?" he inquired, at length.

"We go to the Pass," I replied, "and thence across the mountains to *Reichenberg*."

"When shall you reach the Pass?" continued the old man, eagerly, fixing his glittering eye upon us, and resting his gaunt figure against his staff.

"We think of arriving there before nightfall," was my answer. "The road is well known to us—the evenings are long—the weather is fine!"

"Yes," added the smuggler, "fine till midnight. But we shall have a thunderstorm soon after. I saw it at *Jeschken*." He ceased, and once more he scanned us with his penetrating eye. "Gentlemen," he proceeded, "would you do poor people a favour? When you come to the inn at the Pass ask for Nicholas Andrè, and let him know that at one o'clock we are to be met with in the forest, at a mile's distance from the road. Bid him be there with his men. Tell him the line must be passed by three o'clock, or we shall smell the devil's tinder-box. As for turning back, as heretofore, it is not to be thought of, for the green-coats on the Saxon frontier are as shy of their honesty as a girl of her virtue. Will you do this, gentlemen? Don't be ashamed of it. Our trade's as honourable as any, let the parson say what he will. Holy Mary! Doesn't the man himself live upon the wickedness and sin of all Christendom?"

We promised the old man to do his bidding. The deeply-sinking sun, behind which dark storm-clouds were already clustering, warned us to set out. The smugglers broke into numerous small groups, and descended into the plains below, as we proceeded in the opposite direction. Magnificent forests soon rustled about us; the air grew more misty; a veil was over the mountains, the highest points of which were tinged with a rosy vapour, whilst the valleys reeked with a slowly-crawling and oppressive steam. After a two-hours' journey we reached the ravine. It formed one of the few navigable roads to Bohemia—a land defended by a mountain-wreath, and lying in the heart of Germany, like a slothful monarch proud of his grandeur and territory, and contented to knit his gloomy brow in answer to the murmurs of a people. Bohemia is a land of splendour, of enchantment, and devotion; but her beauty is as the beauty of a dream! Innocent she is, and virtuous, and melancholy only when from the distant past the complaining cry of early greatness heaves along the fertile plains, like a hollow earth-sigh; when the ruins of her thousand castles

totter, and war-like notes in the night-time sweep through the air like an invisible and supernatural host. In such moments the ancient spirit erects itself as of yore, and seeks in the twilight radiance, lingering amongst the mountains, the old magnificence, the old energy, the old zeal, and love of liberty. Yet all is but a dream. The world-weary land sinks again to sleep, and is again happy and unconscious as a babe. Yes! Bohemia is a lovely land. We knew it to be so, and hence our frequent visits to thee, melodious, song-creating country, where passion allures, sorrow sheds blissful tears, and affection lights on sweet and sunny lips!

In the ravine, called, as we have seen, *The Pass*, there rested a profound tranquillity. A few mean-looking huts stood in the shade of darkly-projecting woods, and beyond these there was no sign of human habitation. I have often wondered that piety has not sought an asylum here for its twilight joy of silent devotion. No impertinent eye intrudes into this hidden way. Heaven itself but half bends down upon it, and then, as if terrified by mountain and rock, precipitates itself quickly over the joyous and exulting plain.

From the lowly building, which here stood in the place of an inn, there issued the merry notes of a fiddle and clarionet. Who has been in Bohemia for half an hour and not encountered a fiddler? Bohemia and music are as inseparable as her own longing for freedom, and her want of energy to effect it. If he can accomplish nothing else, the Bohemian can at least weep his actions into the world in a hundred strains, and thus render music the priest at the grave of departed liberty.

The inn swarmed with people of every description. Travelling journeymen, turf-cutters, dealers in shavings, smugglers, and other characters native to forest and valley, were in noisy conversation with the waiting women. At the spacious stove, where, in spite of the July heat, a potent fire was blazing, sat a blind fiddler, who, with remarkable address, whilst scraping his violin, contrived to imitate the notes of an accompanying clarionet, and at the same time, by the application of his naked feet to a hollow deal-board, to elicit the music of drums, both large and kettle. Incomplete and imperfect as such forced music necessarily was, it was at the least novel, and more successful than could have been expected.

Our entrance caused a slight interruption amongst the merry people. Ready, but shy as ever, they prepared a table for us, and then crowded together at a little distance. The fiddler alone was undisturbed. He tuned his instrument anew, and then played away with greater force than ever. The girls from the neighbouring huts formed graceful partners for a dance; and by degrees the company resumed their former gaiety, and were in general motion. It was a novel picture, as original and national as a painter could desire it. As darkness approached, dancing came to an end. The men sat down to cards; some of the girls waited upon the guests; others laughed in merry idleness, and acted as gay spectators of the happy scene.

The landlord, a man of kind and open aspect, asked our wishes in the usual phrase. Our demands were few, and, being satisfied, we re-

bered the commission of our smuggler. A girl was standing near window, alone, and occupied apparently with her peculiar thoughts. I made a sign to her, and she approached. Bohemian girls are seldom beautiful, but often interesting. The one before us was both. She

was delicately fashioned, with a countenance that would have become a lady of the land." Like all border women, she wore a coloured kerchief, loosely but gracefully entwined about her auburn hair. From her bosom, attached to a simple black ribband, hung a gold coin, and either side two ancient twenty-kreuzer pieces. These, generally smugglers' gifts, are worn by Bohemian border-girls until love exchanges them for the crucifix and string of amber beads. I thought I could not trust my errand to a sweeter confidante; and her I chose accordingly for my purpose. "Can you tell me, child," said I, "where you may meet with Nicholas André? I have some news for him."

"I am well known to Nicholas," replied the girl, a blush overspread her handsome countenance as she spoke. "I am his friend. You may confide your news to me."

"I'll swear, now, you are sweethearts!" said my companion, boldly. "Come, pretty Mary, tell us where's your treasure?"

"Theresa, sir," said the maiden, correcting him, and courtseying. "I am an old Simon's daughter, and I am here to-day to help the girls."

"Yes," continued my friend, interrupting her, "and to see what pretty riddles Nicholas can propose to those black eyes of yours—eh, fair one?"

Before the damsel could make answer her name was called from the side in a sharp and angry tone. The girl flew to the door, and the next minute we saw her hanging on the arm of a young and stout-looking man. He was dressed in the usual coarse garments of the smuggler. A sullen look from the man paled the roses upon the maiden's cheek, and anxiety and grief had suddenly possessed themselves of her rounded forehead.

"If you wish it, Nicholas," said Theresa, "I will go home; but I will ask first to the gentlemen."

The smuggler slowly advanced to our table. Every fibre in him was Bohemian. Every lineament exhibited discontent and peevishness. I at once discharged my errand. A few questions sufficed to clear the brow of the young smuggler, and he did not hesitate to take my hair and draw it to our table. Theresa brought a fresh pitcher of water, and then drew a stool to her lover's side. We discoursed generally, and then I reverted to the present expedition. This led me to refer to the tales which I had heard in the morning, and I spoke compassionately of the many perils that beset the poor smuggler, and with a row of the many instances in which blood had been shed and life cruelly sacrificed. Theresa sighed deeply as I reminded her of what she too well knew. Her fair arms gradually found their way to her lover's neck, and I could hear her whispering in his ear long before I ceased.

"You hear, Nicholas, you hear!"

The smuggler gently removed the maiden's arms, and then addressed himself to me.

"I will not contradict you, gentlemen," said he, throwing his broad hat into a corner of the room, and enabling us to make a more particular survey of his countenance. He discovered a high and noble forehead, over which the gory threads of a desperate wound were drawn, and a fierce and haughty eye denoting all the passions of a daring fiery temperament. "I will not contradict you. You may be right, and Theresa too. Our trade is a dangerous and restless trade, condemned and despised by the world at large. We are the outlaws of society; and your city men, as well as your country boors, turn their backs upon us as though we were the mere scum and dregs of human nature. Let them think so;—and yet let me tell you, that to be even a scorned smuggler, there needs some honesty of soul, and the power too to reckon with one's own affliction. Who can tell how much joy and pleasure of life—how much sweet and quiet happiness—how much peace to his broken heart, his miserable calling costs the poor smuggler?"

Theresa pressed the speaker's hands, and by her looks attempted to appease the wrath which a few words had brought upon his pale and quivering lip. The eye of Nicholas wandered unsteadily through the room, as if questioning every individual present. He then placed his short pipe of carved yew, which he had hitherto smoked, at his side, and passed his long brown fingers through his raven hair. We importuned him with inquiries, and begged him to communicate to us something more of smuggler life, and solemnly assured him of our secrecy.

"You are Saxons," exclaimed Nicholas after a pause, "and it is an old saying with us, that honesty is a Saxon virtue. I believe it; for you are all happy, and happiness is the holder of a good conscience. But we Bohemians, and especially we scrubby borderers, sneak into life when cursed mischance is watching for us at the threshold. It doesn't require great spirit to spit upon a smuggler, to write him down as a man that feeds upon the fat of sin, and carouses upon the stolen goods of nations. It is easy enough to do this,—nothing can be more comfortably discussed at the stove and in the cosy parlour. But take an iron clouted staff in your hand—the free lance of the wretched smuggler—and trample under foot a law which millions regard as holy, without being terrified at the beating of your own heart, and the cries of your own, perhaps tenderly-bred, conscience! Do you think a bold will and a determined nature are not needed here? I tell you there is virtue in the traffic which achieves the perfect outlawry of a human being without staining the purity of his own self-respect."

The landlord approached our table, and touched the smuggler on the shoulder.

"Softly, softly, Nicholas!" said he. "We are all friends here; but how do we know that a traitor doesn't lurk behind the window-shutters?"

Nicholas thanked his friend for the warning with a warm pressure of the hand. Theresa replenished our glasses, placed a screen before the window to intercept our voices, and then drew her chair still

closer to that of her lover. He had himself advanced nearer to us. The air without was fearfully oppressive. In the far distance the lightning was already visible. Black clouds hung like the flowing beards of giants down into the ravine; and through a window-chink one could espy a rent in the heavens whose white fire illumined a rock that stood on the opposite side of the defile, like a spirit keeping watch at the pass's entrance.

"And after all," proceeded Nicholas, "I never thought to be a smuggler. My poor father,"—he crossed himself as he spoke, and tears started into the eyes of Theresa,—"my poor father owned a small hut here in the mountains. We were not rich, but we never knew what it was to want a wholesome meal. I was the only child of my parents, and was therefore sent to school, where I contrived to learn more than boys of my condition generally do. The old man was very proud of it, and resolved to send me later in life to the seminary in Prague, if not indeed to the university. It happened in my case as it falls out with others; our dearest wishes are crossed by the freaks of some capricious imp. My father carried on a trade in timber; and by great attention and perseverance he brought it to good account. We had good customers on all sides of us—in the Saxon border villages, and further up in the mountains. We paid the best price to the count for the best wood, and our patrons increased their favours. We took especial care never to want a stock of dry timber, and after every storm we were the first to lay an embargo upon the broken beech stems. The forester, an old man, and as honest a fellow as ever trod the earth, was very friendly to us, and made it easy to deal with him. As long as he lived we had no reason to complain. If a hurricane thinned the forest, the noblest trunks were immediately marked for my father, and the wood always proved of the best. The good man, however, died suddenly of apoplexy, and an upstart young fellow, who was in great favour with the Count, was appointed to the place. He immediately assumed towards every one a high and dictatorial tone, pleasing to none, and least of all to me. My blood circles quickly in my veins. The old Bohemian fire flashes up with little provocation within me. Curb me too tightly, and I tear off the rein and fling it into the teeth of my rider. I am a poor Bohemian, but a free man.

"My father soon saw that the new state of things would not be of long duration, and it grieved him to find me for ever interposing with angry speeches, and bringing passion to storm against precaution and all prudent calculation. It was at last resolved to send me to the capital. My ever active father, hoping to prevent a rupture with the forester, proposed a fresh contract with him for the wood. But did you never find overbearing men delighting to excite the lowly to fury and resistance by the goadings of insupportable tyranny? The forester declined to receive my father's proposals; he further forbade him to touch the wood which the wind had felled, and at length denied him the privilege of visiting the forests at all. My father appealed to the Count for justice; and he, a kind and easy man, promised him every satisfaction. Flattery and fawning were, however,

too much for the Count—they stifled his sense of right. It happened that at this time a violent thunderstorm uprooted a number of the finest beech trees; my father, relying upon the Count's promise, selected some, and carried them into the thicket apart from the rest. The forester with great ceremony informed against us, denounced us as thieves, and so prejudiced his lordship against us, that my father was arrested, indicted, thrown into prison, and rendered a beggar before he was again at liberty.

"It was in this way that we were ruined by a blow. My plan of education fell to the ground of itself when the misfortune came. We were without a home, without bread. My father in despair rushed into the wide world, and we knew not whither his despair and shame had hurried him. As for me, I took to violin-playing and to ballad-singing, and with my best exertions could only scantily supply my poor lamenting mother with needful sustenance. This lasted half a year. Hatred at the injustice of men grated in my songs, and I have prayed a hundred times that my bow might be converted into a naked sword. My mother wept as I sang, or if she ceased to weep, it was to pray to a blue and sunny heaven—not for pity, but for justice. But a beggared son and an outcast mother may pray long enough, and say their beads over till their breath fails them, before Heaven will interpose on their behalf. We continued in misery, begging together, and for months on the very verge of famine.

"It was a hard life, gentlemen, and I gained some notion of what men call human wretchedness,—a state by no means easy to make square with the lessons of horn-books and the teachings of our fine prayer-books with their gilt backs and edges. Submissive virtue became quite loathsome to me. I was ready to honour a man who would trample upon all that lawfulness enjoins, and to set at defiance religion——. You need not touch me, Theresa, I know very well what I am saying. I can't forget that terrible time, nor the influence it has had upon my present way of life.

"The autumn was already far advanced, when one evening I returned to the little village here where we temporarily rented a den in the hut of a poor and ancient friend. Mother had been taken ill on the road, and no wonder, with her anxieties, her grief, her fatigues in every kind of wind and weather. Want of nourishment, too, had a good share in the business. I could play and sing for subsistence, but I couldn't beg. A decent fellow with a resolute will had rather steal than beg. Begging is a virtue only with the rabble.

"We entered the hole together. There was plenty of hard straw and fresh air. The last came briskly enough through the broken windows. There was a rushlight too, just flickering in the neck of a broken bottle, and by its gleam we perceived a man lying upon the straw. He was covered with rags. His face was deathly white and sunken, and his eyes gazed with an idiotic stare upon the sorry rushlight. The cheekbones looked as if they were ready to push through the parchment skin, and the bony hand held a crucifix pressed hard against the chest. For a moment I believed that I saw a ghost. I bent over the figure, rigid as it was with spasm, and, heaven and earth! the broken creature was—my Father!

"My mother dropped on her knees before the straw. I covered the dear man's hands with kisses, softened them with my tears, and hurled curses on his persecutors, as if these could appease the sinking man, hungry as he was for consolation.

" 'Quiet, quiet, Nicholas !' faltered my father. 'Thou seest that I have taken up my cross.' He passed the crucifix over his pallid lips, and the sarcastic smile of uttermost despair crawled over them. 'Wife, wife,' he continued, addressing my mother, 'had I known that Heaven could be so tardy in its aid, I would have cut this holy figure from the wood, and sold it to an Israelite. Oh, help me, blessed Mother ! ere thou seest an honest man, because of his honesty, selling himself to the eternal enemy of man.'

"A knock at the door was heard almost before the words fell from my father's lips. The landlord of the house entered, and advanced at once to my father.

" 'Andrè,' said he, 'will you earn money?' "

" 'Will I?' said my father with a scornful voice. 'Ask these rotten bones if they will carry me. Give me bread, Michael. I can give you no money in return, but I can sell my Lord, as Judas did of old.'

" 'Andrè !' exclaimed another voice, 'you shall have to eat and to drink as much as you will. Keep your crucifix : you may need it yet.'

" 'Is that you, Wenzel ?' asked my father, raising himself with difficulty on the straw. 'What do you desire of me ?'

" 'Very little, Andrè. I want to add just now some twenty pounds of good tobacco to my stock, and perhaps a few pieces of fine cotton and waistcoat-stuff; and if you would earn a pretty piece of money, and are not afraid of the grey-coats, now is your time. You will find outside plenty of clothes and a good supper. Nicholas and your wife shall join you. All I ask of you is to make your way to the borders within three hours' time.'

"I shall never in all my life forget the scene which followed this invitation. My father roused himself wonderfully. He put the crucifix in his bosom, clasped his hands until the bones cracked again, then sank on his knees before the expiring rushlight, and amidst wild tears and wilder laughter proceeded to pray, to sing like a priest at mass the *Dominus vobiscum* and other sacred strains. His mad words still tingle in my ears. He called the miserable rush-candle his lamp of eternity that had illuminated his way, the most holy of his bruised heart, and by its stilly flickering vowed eternal constancy to the path which Providence had opened out before him. My mother clung to him, beseeching him, in the tenderest terms that love and woman's agony can lay upon her faltering tongue, to withstand temptation and avoid the perilous course. Despair was more powerful than the wife—despair and a burning desire of vengeance that mounts like wildfire into the brain of the wrongfully aggrieved.

"I will not detain you, gentlemen. That very night my father put on the smuggler's dress, and, for the first time in this fashion, he crossed the borders. He returned from his mission in safety : we

could live from his laborious earnings; but, once chained to dire necessity, we were compelled to give up the ideas by which we had formerly regulated our life and estimated that of others. My father was and continued to be an honest smuggler. He worked to maintain the breath in his drooping wife, of whom law and established morality would have robbed him. I soon accompanied my father on his excursions. We defrauded no one. We attempted to equalise what the wilful ignorance or extravagance of the revenue people had made unequal. It is no sin to evade the customs. Who gives a king authority to tax productions indispensable to man, and of which neighbouring countries have a superfluity? Laws have risen very strangely sometimes, and stranger still the register of human sins.

"For a year and longer we were prosperous. The officers were not over severe, but took bribes like all men who receive pay for their fellow-men's transgressions. Besides, a twenty-piece from the hand of a right-hearted smuggler as my father was, brings a blessing into the house of a border officer. The fellows knew it, and it was to our advantage. It happened unfortunately about this time, that in consequence of the high prices of certain articles in Bohemia the smugglers hereabouts rapidly increased in number, and hundreds at the same time were conveying bales upon bales of the forbidden article across the frontier. There arose some sharp fighting. The staff of officers was augmented, and the new comers were harder to deal with than their predecessors. With the very next transport after their arrival we had a deadly engagement. Blood was shed on both sides. Several of the officers fell, but a greater number still of the poor smugglers. My father was killed on the spot. In defending his stiff corpse I received this wound on the forehead. The goods were all lost, but the dead men were recovered, and they received an honourable burial.

"After this unhappy event my mother got more sorrowful and melancholy, and gradually pined away. She died in the course of a very few months. I remained faithful to the occupation in which my father had fallen, slain by heartless hirelings. What else could I do? — friendless in the world, backed only by my own strength and the mettle of my heart. Now anger and vengeance unites me to the brotherhood. I must have full atonement for the blood of a murdered father, and, until this is accomplished, I am faithful to my calling. I do not desire to visit the innocent with punishment. The law is my enemy, and the law will I resist. I will break its commandments until I can once more openly be honest and not fear the light of day. Upon the issue of this night much depends. I have designed a scheme which, if it succeed, will put the necessary means within my power. Theresa and a happy home are part of my reward. I am not ambitious. I can content myself with little. But I have a spirit that calls me to be free, that thunders into my ears that freedom is my birthright, as it was that of our fathers centuries ago."

Nicholas ceased. The guests, until now employed in card-playing and other amusements, stood up, and one after another quitted the apartment. Theresa lingered near her lover. She uttered a few words in a gentle whisper, and my companion and I withdrew to a

distance. Whatever was her request, it was not favourably answered by the smuggler. He looked at her with a sternness for which I could not forgive him. She became more importunate, but with no better success. At length, with a drooping head, she suffered her lover's hand to slip from her own, and then she made her way to a cupboard in a corner of the room, from which she took a complete suit of clothes, such as we had seen worn by the cattle-dealers. She presented the garments to Nicholas. The long leathern whip was there, and the capacious money-pouch.

"Put them on, Nicholas!" said she; "they will at least be some protection."

The eyes of the fond girl brightened when she found that her lover acquiesced at once in the metamorphosis. We were waiting anxiously for the next movements, when the door suddenly burst open, and the landlord rushed in crying—

"The Hussar, the Hussar!"

A loud and general cry from the outside followed quickly upon the announcement, and we immediately concluded from the general commotion that the officers had arrived, and that an attack would be the consequence. The cheerful looks of the returning smugglers, their unmixed joyousness, soon convinced us that our apprehensions were not well-grounded.

"Didn't I say that he would come to-night?" asked the landlord after the first rejoicings. "The air was quite ready for him; it was very sultry, and the vapours stretched along the low grounds like serpents. It is the very air for spirits. God's blessing on the poor fellow whose soul can find no rest in the grave! It is a christian ghost, that it is, protecting honest fellows who have to toil and moil through life, against the villany of the grey-coats!"

"Is the Will-o'-the-wisp abroad?" I enquired, supposing the landlord to refer to an apparition not more alarming than this.

"Yes, if you like to call it so," he replied. "Will-o'-the-wisp, or Hussar, it's all the same. If you will walk as far as the edge of the forest, or ascend the rock close by, you may see him galloping along under a canopy of cloud. His yellow cloak is fluttering awfully about him, and the vapourish nag spits blue fire from his nostrils!"

My companion listened with an open mouth to the communication of the landlord. He caught me by the arm, and fairly dragged me out to look upon the singular phenomenon. Theresa anticipated our movements, and bade us follow her. She ran lightly as a gazelle towards the mountain slope, and broke through the thicket, eluding the branches with noiseless agility. A sulphury atmosphere was hanging like lead about the earth. Not a breath of air moved the juicy birchen leaves: now and then a feeble lightning flash emerged from the zenith, and spent itself like a changing serpent-skin in the horizon. By the aid of a narrow path we ascended the rock, keeping the fair and nimble guide always in our eye. Reaching the flat summit, from which an extensive view across the frontiers towards Saxony discloses itself, we saw with great distinctness, driving along the open plains towards the lowlands, a bright and phosphorescent ball. As beheld from so considerable a distance, the enormous light

lost its primitive form, as well as anything which might attach to an awful apparition. It rolled on in flying speed, now resting for a moment, now prancing like a snorting timorous steed, diffusing far around a circle of glistening light until it fell deeper and deeper down, and at length vanished behind a copse.

"Now it goes towards *Schwedensteige*," said Theresa. "The mist must be deep, and close upon the ground. Look! there it is again, galloping backwards in a shower of sparks towards the sand-pits." Theresa was right. The monstrous light which in those regions for half a night wanders abroad whilst a storm is winging its rapid way onwards, was now rolling again up hill, presenting to the excited fancy the figure of a horseman in full gallop, with his cloak fluttering behind him in the wind.

"We are safe!" exclaimed Nicholas, who, having followed us, had that moment mounted the rock. "No officer ventures into the open air whilst the Hussar is out. Let us once get the wains into the forest, and there is no fear. The Hussar is the trustiest lantern that Heaven could send the smuggler. Don't we acknowledge our gratitude when we throw a pound of good tobacco every three months into the pit for him? There is nothing like keeping upon good terms with spirits, let them be good or evil."

We still continued to gaze upon the movements of the travelling Hussar, and should never have tired of our watch, had not Theresa warned her lover that midnight must be near, and that it was time for departure and preparation.

Expectation kept us awake. Nicholas had changed his dress, and in his new costume might deceive any one. The rest of the smugglers were also fully equipped; they fastened their leathern belts tighter round the body, gripped their dreadful sticks, and quitted the inn under the command of the youthful Nicholas. Theresa entreated her lover to be prudent, and received his promise and assurance in one long heart-felt kiss of separation.

"To-morrow we are free and happy, Theresa!" said the smuggler. "Be pacified therefore, sweetest, and let me quit thee light of heart."

The neighbouring wood soon swallowed up the tumult of the departed company. The wind began to moan against the casement; distant thunder travelled with a hollow murmur from mountain to mountain.

Theresa returned to us, and took a seat at our side. Her bosom heaved in feverish excitement, and she was lost in reverie. We attempted to cheer her by discourse, but she did not even listen to us.

"I am sick at heart to-night," she said at length. "Would that he were safely back again!" The wind was getting up. Large drops of rain beat against the window, the forest roared, the old pine trees cracked and struck against each other; the very boughs moaned and complained as if an expressive life lay hidden within them. The landlord walked to and fro, then sat down at our table, and then went to the door to catch in his practised ear one sound that might give him notice of the returning smugglers. He approached us at last, in deep dejection, and shoved his little leathern cap uneasily from one side of his head to the other.

"What's the matter, father?" asked Theresa instantly.

"The Hussar is gone, child," replied the man. "The weather has chased him away. We are no longer safe from the hunters."

"Heaven!" cried the girl. "How late is it, sir?" she asked, turning to me.

"Almost one!" I answered.

The raging of the thunder-storm, the pattering of the falling rain mixed with hail, forbade our distinguishing the slightest distant sound. We could have sworn, at times, that we heard shrill whistling, the confused cries of men, and the neighing of horses; but the landlord assured us that it was the mere whimpering of the forest, the tempest settling itself in the lofty tree-tops, or in wild rage beating a path through the twisted thicket.

"Your townspeople," said he, "and those who live in the heart of the country, know little how it fares with their less fortunate brethren at the borders."

"Hush!" cried Theresa, starting up. "They are here!" We now heard, and that distinctly, the tramping of horses' hoofs, and the sudden stopping of a waggon.

"They come, they come!" screamed the poor girl. The landlord opened the window and looked out. The storm had ceased, the clouds had burst asunder, and were now drawn in black thick flakes along the mountains.

"There is a waggon!" said the landlord; "but the horses can scarcely stand; they have been hunted to death."

A few men who had come in charge of the waggon now entered the room, the sweat hanging on their brows, and they breathless.

"What's your news?" enquired the landlord. Theresa stood next to me, trembling in every joint, and I could feel her heart beating at my shoulder.

"The cursed brutes came down the mountain in the thunder-storm," said one of the smugglers, "and fell upon our track. We saw them sneaking through the forest, at least two hundred strong, and we had to fly for it. What has become of the others, Heaven knows! Nicholas is with them, and he'll play the devils a trick yet."

A gun sounded from the forest. "Hark!" exclaimed Theresa; "a shot!" A second was heard still nearer, and then a loud and fearful volley.

"As I am a Christian," said the smuggler, "it's all over with them! Why didn't that confounded Hussar ride for only one hour longer? That's the way with the world. He didn't mind pocketing my good tobacco. He wouldn't have caught a consumption in the open air. I'll never look for gratitude again!"

The waggon and horses were made secure, and the bales of goods with wonderful celerity were stowed away in potato pits and other hiding-places.

"Now, my good fellows," said the landlord, "go you and help to attack the rascals in the rear. You are strong to-night. Give them a hearty thrashing, and you are at peace for a year to come."

The men were off in an instant. The firing continued, but now

apparently from the left side of the forest. I turned to behold the countenance of Theresa, but she was gone. I searched for her through the house, but in vain. I quitted the inn, and before the door I encountered my travelling companion and the landlord listening intently to the distant conflict. Theresa was not with them. The landlord had not seen her. My interest for the poor girl was excited no less than curiosity, and I went from house to house to seek for her. Returning from a fruitless quest, I heard, as if in the air, a cry which I shall never forget. It was the exclamation of horror and affright. I looked up, and beheld Theresa on the point of the rock, no longer a maiden, but dressed as a cattle dealer. Her flowing locks alone betrayed her. I called upon her to descend, but she was conscious of nothing but the danger in which she had a moment before discovered her beloved Nicholas. Whilst I spoke she vanished; she descended on the other side, and disappeared in the underwood. Urged by my misgivings, I broke into the forest, hoping to arrest her; but I became quickly entangled in the bushes, and therefore forced to give up the chase. I saw the maiden flying before me, as if inspired by the ancient spirit of heroism, which has long ceased to beam upon the hills of Bohemia—upon her thousand citadels and strongholds. The firing grew less frequent, and soon ceased entirely. No smuggler, no officer, made his appearance. Theresa too, whom I longed to welcome as the harbinger of victory, was not forthcoming, nor were any tidings of the recent conflict. Nature was once more calm. The peace of holy night hovered with moist and blissful steps along the slumbering valley. The snorting of furiously driven horses disturbed at last the awful calm. Twenty heavily laden waggons galloped out of the wood, surrounded by a troop of blood-smeared smugglers. I ran to one of the foremost, and asked him what had happened. He told me in a word or two that the officers were routed with heavy loss—that the goods were all secured, and that the daring scheme of Nicholas, notwithstanding the unforeseen surprise, had succeeded to perfection.

My heart was lighter. I looked impatiently for the adventurous damsel, and longed to congratulate her upon the success of her Nicholas, and upon the prospect of happiness that awaited her. The smugglers assembled by degrees. Many were bleeding profusely, some were mortally wounded. I learned that several were lying dead in the forest, with the removal of whom Nicholas was still occupied.

"Nicholas has the luck of twenty men," said one; "the officers baited him like a wild boar. Twice they were on his heel—but the devil himself must have struck them blind. He set a phantom before them, which lured them off, and carried them with curses far into the wood. Nicholas escaped, of course, and can make his pretty Theresa now happy for life."

The inn was soon crowded with wounded men. The girls who lived in the neighbouring huts came to relieve them with gentle and accustomed hands, and with hearts stout as the bravest.

"Where can Theresa stay?" enquired the landlord.

"She went to meet Nicholas," replied an old smuggler. "I can't blame the poor child. She must have waited for him in torture. God forgive the great people, say I, for bringing so much sorrow and trouble upon the poor with their accursed laws."

Some time elapsed before Nicholas arrived with the rest of the smugglers, and those who had been sacrificed in the fight. He was heated from the march, and blood was flowing from two wounds which he had received in his left arm. He shook my hand kindly, but a melancholy smile was fixed on his pallid lips.

"Where is Theresa?" he asked. "None but she shall dress my wounds. I am a free man to-day, and she is mine."

"She went to meet you," said the old smuggler; "no one has seen her here."

The wounded man turned paler than ever, and his eye glanced suspiciously from man to man.

"Oh, she could not have been so mad!" he exclaimed, seizing his hat, and preparing for departure.

"Stay, Nicholas," said I, interposing, and detaining him with a look of entreaty; "the officers are still scouring the woods; if they meet you, you are a dead man!"

"True, true!" he answered hurriedly; "but in the name of Heaven bring me my Theresa!"

"She will soon return," I replied, although the thought lay heavily upon my stammering tongue. I proceeded to acquaint him where and how I had last seen Theresa, and with what little success I had attempted to detain her. Nicholas, exhausted by his violence and loss of blood, dropped on a chair as I spoke. He was an oak felled by the resistless storm. He suffered his wounds to be bound up and attended to, as a child might do; and he stared, as if bereft of all consciousness, into the wild countenances of those around him. Day dawned, and still no Theresa appeared. Nicholas would have persisted in his resolution to seek her out, had he not been himself helpless. Weary and faint the fellow gnashed his teeth in bitter disappointment. I sat by him, and exhausted my whole stock of persuasion, hoping to appease him. He shut his ears, and would not listen to me.

"I will be calm," he said to himself. "I ought to be so. I saw my father bleed beneath the pitiless muskets of the accursed grey-coats. I saw my mother die of grief at the destruction of her happiness—at the cruelty of a scornful world. I vowed to take vengeance on the stiffnecked law for the lives of that luckless pair, and I have been true and faithful in my revenge. And I have been fair and honest to the world. It was the law that outraged innocence. The law only have I punished. I have not levelled my gun at the head of the imbecile lawgiver, to whom the agony of the poor is unknown,—who never considered the bitter tears that fall in the house of indigence. I am not infamous. I have committed no sin. The murder is expiated—the law has paid the penalty, and I have done. I have nothing more to seek but happiness and joy on the bosom of my Theresa. Theresa! Theresa! keep not away! Send her to me,

Heaven! and grant me at length one hour of pure unruffled earthly bliss!"

The smugglers were dumb. The morning twilight crept with a soft gleam into the desolate room. The doors were locked and bolted. It wanted yet an hour or so to sunrise, when a low knocking was heard. The landlord quitted us to inquire the cause, and two of the stoutest smugglers accompanied him for protection. The word "Theresa" carried joy, excitement, and apprehension throughout the house. Nicholas sprang from his lair like a roused lion. He flew to the door, but staggered and fell against the wall, as the landlord and his companions entered, bearing upon their arms the bleeding body of a lovely girl. It was Theresa!

The damsel still wore the dress of a cattle-dealer. About her slender waist was the money-pouch with its red leathern strap; from her shoulder hung the whip, cut to pieces by a sabre. Drops of blood trickled from her bosom. Her face was covered by her hair. The once brunette complexion was pale as marble. The fairest of eyelids opened and closed with the last feeblest efforts of sinking nature, whilst the fond eye still struggled to speak its leave-taking to the chosen of her heart. She raised her hand — the young smuggler approached — knelt at her side, and, groaning bitterly, endeavoured to repeat her darling name.

"For me, Theresa, for me — for me — I am thy murderer!"

The dying girl smiled: she could not speak. The gentlest inclination of her head gainsaid her lover's self-accusation. With the last powers of life, she drew the youth towards her, and attempted to kiss the blood-red wound upon his forehead. She then sunk back: the delicate lid fell slowly and softly down upon her failing eyes, and Nicholas closed them for ever with a kiss. The heroic maiden was gone. Her disguise had misled the officers in their pursuit. She suffered them to overtake her, trusting to her sex for her relief and safety. She had forgotten that mercenaries know no compassion, — are strangers to magnanimity.

With sunrise my companion and I quitted the scene of this tragical adventure. Nicholas was unnaturally calm. He had ceased to be violent when the last breath of his Theresa had departed from her soul. In spite of his wounds he insisted upon accompanying us across the nearest mountain. He had business, he said, to settle at the Count's.

Two days later I heard that the Count's forester had been shot — by poachers. My blood curdled as I heard it: I thought of Nicholas and his visit. I could get no intelligence of him, and I could not but fear that the injustice practised upon his father had driven an affectionate heart and an indomitable spirit to the perpetration of this dreadful crime. God be thanked, I am no judge! With much sad experience of life, I should perform that office badly. Could I whisper into the ear of lawgivers and of kings, I would entreat them to think solemnly of the poor committed to their trust — helpless brothers — co-sharers of eternity — neglected and oppressed, and driven to crime by ignorance, immorality, and want.

THE DEATH OF CLYTEMNESTRA:

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

BY SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART.

[THIS attempt to render to the English reader one of the favourite and most striking subjects of the Greek dramatists, forms the fifth act of an unfinished tragedy begun many years ago, and originally intended for the stage. Reflection, however, convinced the author that the catastrophe was unsuited for representation before a modern audience.

In the earlier acts, which are in great measure borrowed from the Greek, Orestes (accompanied by his friend Pylades) visits Argos, as a stranger from the games of Elis; he finds the murderers of his father Agammemnon (*Ægisthus* and his mother *Clytemnestra*) upon the throne, and much alarmed by visions predicting his own appearance as the avenger of their crime. In an interview with his sister *Electra*, whom he encounters when rendering offerings to the tomb of Agammemnon, he relates his own fabulous death, the chariot race at the games, and produces the urn containing his supposed ashes. Moved by her grief, he afterwards discloses himself; enjoins and obtains her secrecy and acquiescence in his designs; so far as they relate to the crown of Argos; is admitted, with his tale, to *Ægisthus* and *Clytemnestra*, who are transported with guilty joy at the news of the death of Orestes, the only avenger they had cause to dread. While he is received in the palace, with all honours, Pylades seeks the surviving friends of Agammemnon, headed by *Creon*; communicates the safety and return of Orestes; and proposes a rising in the city in favour of the rightful king. The duty of inflicting justice on Agammemnon's murderers devolves, however, personally on Orestes. He regards himself held to this act by Religion and the Fates. In the character and situation of Orestes the greater part of the dramatic passion employed must necessarily consist. He is supposed to have been trained, by the priesthood of the temple in which his childhood had found refuge, to habits of primæval purity, piety, and gentleness, as well as to passive and unquestioned obedience to all enjoined by his teachers.

Upon this tranquil and gentle state of mind the tale of his father's murder and his mother's guilt has been lately obtruded, on his attaining the age ripe for action. The intelligence of what he is, and what is expected from him by the Fates and Men, has, in fact, been his priestly ordeal. He is singled out from earth as the Avenger. He must change his nature to fit himself to his work, and he does this through the earnestness of his convictions. Throughout the tragedy, *Cassandra*, — who is supposed not to have shared the doom of her

lord, Agammemnon, but to be permitted to rove at large through the palace and its precincts, safe in her frenzy, and disregarded in her prophecies,— plays a considerable part.

Towards the end of the fourth act, *Ægisthus*, tormented by his conscience, despite his belief in the death of *Orestes*, seeks the tomb of *Agammemnon* to offer sacrifice and expiatory prayer. He is there met and slain by *Orestes*. The second victim alone now remains. And it is the death of *Clytemnestra* which furnishes the action and catastrophe of the concluding scenes. It will be observed that the author has, in some passages, partially imitated or borrowed from the Greek dramatists,—much less so, however, than in the former acts; and had the tragedy not originally been designed for the stage, he would have been far more largely indebted to them, not only for the dialogue but the movement and conduct of the catastrophe. In the closet, we may write as for a Greek audience; for the stage, we must not forget that the Past, and such a Past, can only be *paraphrased* for the Present.]

SCENE I.

The interior of the Tomb of AGAMMEMNON, a vast pile (in the architecture of the Treasury of MENELAUS); at the farther end an Altar, before which a Curtain is drawn aside, showing in the Recess ORESTES beside the Body of ÆGISTHUS. Moonlight through the open doors.*

ORESTES.

My feet are glued. The silence, like a wall,
Girds me around; and the Religious Horror
Broods, like Primæval Night o'er sullen Time.
Why dost thou grasp me with thy heavy hand
Discrown'd Clay? By all the Gods, I swear
I thought the dead man pluck'd me by the robe.
I will not stir! Here Death and I will sit
And dream the unnatural deeds we dare not do.

Enter PYLADES.

PYLADES.

Why lingerest thou, *Orestes*? Night creeps on.
Arise; thy father, from this solemn tomb
Demands the *second* victim.

* Though the scene occasionally changes throughout the five acts of the entire Drama, the tomb of *Agammemnon* is seen in every change.

ORESTES.

Art thou *living*?

Give me thy hand—it is a blessed thing
To feel thy pulse beat.

PYLADES.

Can this pious deed,
This reverent justice, shake thee thus? Shame!—Shame!
Thy blow avenged a father.

ORESTES (*starting up.*)

Bravely spoken!
It did! it did! Away! The funeral rites
Are all fulfill'd?

PYLADES.

Not all. The Adulteress lives.

ORESTES.

There Horror breathes again! In every voice,
Yea, in the very jaws of the grim Silence,
My father speaks! Were it not for this heart,
Nature, methinks, were motherless.

Enter CASSANDRA (with a lamp).

I scent

The smell of blood!
(*Approaching Orestes.*) Let me look on thee, Stranger.
The Fates have graved dark letters on thy brow:
Here is the sign of Murther!

ORESTES.

Dost thou hear her?

PYLADES.

The absolving Gods shall deem such murther holy!

[CASSANDRA, *after slowly examining the vault,*
approaches the body of ÆGISTHUS.

PYLADES.

Loiterest thou still? If the Adulteress wake
And learn the deed, thou wilt not find her heart
As weak as thine! Thy crown needs but one blow.

Even now our friends are circling through the city
 The tidings of thy coming; and all Argos
 Shall gather round to hail thee. Not a foe,
 Were but the Slayer slain. Awake, great son
 Of the Atridæ — wake! Thy father's throne,
 Safety, and empire, glory and revenge,
 Our lives, thy sister's life, the heaven-born line
 Of hero-kings to come, wait on thy sword.
 Dost thou delay the blow?

CASSANDRA.

Ho! ho! it is not
 Sleep, but his brother Death! Ægisthus dead!
 How will the Adulteress clasp with joyless arms
 The unloving clay — how will she pray for vengeance!
 But shall she find it?
(Advances to Orestes.) Art thou not Atrides?
 Methinks thou hast his features, his broad brow,
 His kingly aspect. Hast thou from the Shades
 Come palely back, (for by thy glassy eye,
 And thy white lips, I see the Shades have held thee,)
 To do this deed? Hush, or yon she-wolf hear thee!
 Speak not, poor Ghost — creep stealthily — come on,
 Behold thyself avenged! *[She leads him to the corpse.]*

PYLADES.

The Inspired One sees
 Thy father in thy deed. Fulfil the omen,
 And feel his unappeased and sleepless soul
 Within thy breast!

ORESTES.

It shall be so. The eyes
 Of that mad maid bring back his angry image.
 Ye Gods that rule in hell, from out my nature
 Expel whatever of unholy softness
 Came from my mother's milk; and bid me see,
 On earth, no parent but the dead!

*[Shouts faintly heard at a distance. "Orestes!
 "The King Orestes! Perish the Usurpers!"]*

CASSANDRA.

The King Orestes — hark, the King Orestes!
 Then is mine hour at hand. I have lived on,

To look upon the face of the Avenger,
And from th' abysses of the opening Hades
Atrides summons back his slave!

All hail,
Son of the King of Men! I know thee now!
Hail to thy native realm — ascend the throne,
Be great and blest! — all hail the King Orestes!
Ascend thy throne — thou stand'st on the last step, —
'Tis but another corpse!

PYLADES.

She comes — the victim!
That shout hath scared her from her latest sleep;
She seeks Ægisthus in Atrides' tomb;
Prepare the steel! she comes.

ORESTES.

The Heavens be thanked,
I shall not slay her sleeping. Get ye gone;
No eye but that of the remorseless Night,
And the majestic Ghost that reigneth here,
Should look upon this meeting of the son
And mother.

PYLADES.

Be it so; and while thy hand
Strikes down this crown'd treason, I will forth
And lead all Argos hither. In the tomb
Of thy great father, find thy throne. [Exit PYLADES.

(ORESTES, *advancing to close the curtain, perceives that CASSANDRA has seated herself beside the body of ÆGISTHUS.*)

ORESTES.

Dark maid,
Withdraw. Arise: why tarriest thou?

CASSANDRA.

To whisper
Into these ears, that ere the sullen soul
Reach the black shores of the Infernal River,
It shall not be companionless! — It hears me!

ORESTES.

So Madness watches Death! [*Draws the curtains.*

Oh, that Oblivion

Could thus from out the eyes of mine own soul
Shut Slaughter striding on! Be blind, sweet Gods;
And, for one hour at least, this dismal world
Yield to the reign of Atè!

CLYTEMNESTRA (*without*).

Rouse ye, slaves!

Quick, hither bring the buckler and the sword,
And horror-shaking helm. And thou, Menalcaas,
Shout from the rampart of the citadel,
That King Ægisthus, pitiless to foes,
Comes terrible with vengeance.

(*Entering.*) Husband, Lord,

Ægisthus. Wherefore from our marriage-bed
Steal'st thou to these funereal ominous vaults,
Ægisthus, forth! No time for rites and prayers,
But deeds and arms. All Argos is astir.

[*Shouts, "Orestes! the King Orestes!"*

Hark, hear'st thou not dead Agamemnon's tomb
Echo the name "Orestes." [*Advancing towards the curtains.*

ORESTES.

Pass not yet

The Boundaries of the Living.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Gods! the Stranger!

Arm'd, and alone. What dost thou in these walls?
Why thy sword drawn? Why dost thou glare upon me
With those sad troubled eyes? Ho, forth, Ægisthus!

ORESTES.

He hears thee not: he has gone hence. But thou
Shalt join him soon.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Dark man, thy words are omens,

Which may the Heavens avert! Out from my path.
Are mine own slaves turn'd traitors, that my guests
Should wear such looks, and live? What, ho!

ORESTES.

Be still.

Thou art a Queen no more.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

No more a Queen!

Who reigns, then, in these walls? Who wields the sceptre?

ORESTES.

The Shade of Agammemnon.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

My veins freeze.

The night — the sepulchre — this dread man's face,
 Unutterably calm, but calm with clouds
 In which black thunder sleeps! Once more I say,
 Insolent one, what Dæmon led thy steps
 Across these floors?

ORESTES.

The Dæmon men call *Death*!CLYTEMNESTRA (*falteringly and retreating*).

My slaves shall scourge thee hence!

ORESTES.

Thou shalt not stir:

Thy feet are in thy tomb. Nay, never think
 To daunt me with thy frown. (Alas! thy lord
 Found direr perils in thy smile!) Proud woman,
 Listen and tremble, thou! Yon pale-eyed moon,
 Whose name in hell is Hecate, that now calls
 From bloody graves the ghosts of murder'd men—
 Yon Spectre-Sister of the Sun, beheld,
 On such a night as this, in yonder halls,
 The lion-hearted Agammemnon fall
 Beneath the adulterous blade. His dying eyes
 Look'd up to thine, and found no mercy there.
 And yet he was thy lord. He loved thee well.
 The tears of joy were wet upon his cheek;
 The impatient welcome of the weary man,
 After long storms anchor'd at home at last,
 Glow'd on his lips; and, at that very hour,

This hand—this queenly hand—this plighted hand,
 Warm from his clasp, stamp'd with confiding kisses—
 Smote him unarm'd, defenceless, by that altar
 Sacred to guilt itself—the household hearth !
 Now, lift that hand to heaven, and pray the Gods
 That in the grave Justice may sleep for ever !
 On earth she wakes, she holds thee in her grasp.
 Hark : to her judgment "*Life for life !*" Behold
 The Deathsman of her choice ! Prepare to die !

CLYTEMNESTRA.

And who art thou, base stranger in the land,
 That mak'st the wrongs of kings thine own ? We owe
 — We, offspring of the Demi-Gods, whose crowns
 Circled the brows of the eternal Titans
 Whose footstool was the mountains, and whose arms
 Shook to its base the adamant throne
 Of the imperial Jove,—we owe to none,
 Save to our equals and the reverent Fates,
 Account of deeds the purple of our greatness
 Veils from the timorous slander of the crowd.
 Avaunt ! I brave thee ! I defy thy threats !
 Thou canst not look upon mine eyes and strike.
 Majesty needs no armour.—Slave, begone !
 And thank disdain for life.

CASSANDRA (*within the curtain*).

Ascend thy throne !
 Mount *the last step*.—All hail, the King Orestes !

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Whence, whence those baleful words ? O Nemesis !
 I who can look unquailing on the sword
 Of this wild stranger, whom nought living daunts,
 Do tremble, leaf-like, at a dead man's name.

CASSANDRA (*within*).

She tarried not when Agamemnon laid
 His head upon her breast. Woe, woe, thrice woe !
 The son forgets the father !

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ha, again !
 There, where Ægisthus sought the altar—there,
 His own voice mute—and those fierce accents ——

CASSANDRA (*within*).

—— Shaped

By the Avenging Gods.

CLYTEMNESTRA (*seeking to escape the grasp of ORESTES*).

Away !

ORESTES.

Before

Thy footsteps pass the boundary, look upon me.
Is there no witness of ancestral blood
Writ in these features? While thou gazest, think
The dead are come to life.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

I have his ashes.*

Thou saidst—*thou* saidst that he had died in Elis.
Say it again—again; and for thy speech
Buy pardon for all deeds thy hand can do.

ORESTES.

O Mercy ! thou that overshadowest Jove
With thy dew-dropping wings, hear this foul mother ;
And let the breath of those unnatural words
Steam like a cloud betwixt thee and the earth !
He, for whose death thy lips have bless'd the Gods,
Took life from thee—thy Firstborn : his the voice
That did unlock the hidden melodies
That dwell in the name of mother ! his the arms
That clinging round thee made the daily air
Fragrant with blossoms, in whose earliest kiss
All summer seem'd to breathe : he was the link
Between thee and the young and innocent past,
When yet the only temple for thy love
Was in thy husband's breast. And thou canst thank
The Gods, who saw thee shedding o'er his sleep
Such happy tears ; thou, with dry eyes, canst thank
The Gods but for a word—a breath—a lie,
That says "thou hast no son" ——

* Viz. the Urn containing the supposed ashes of Orestes.

CLYTEMNESTRA (*who has been visibly, but proudly, struggling with emotion*).

—— Because no foe !

Thrice have those Prophets that do speak in dreams
Bid me beware Orestes ; thrice, methought,
In that grey hour when from the stream of sleep
Oracular and ominous phantoms rise,
A giant serpent clasp'd me in its coils,
And hiss'd into my ear " Behold Orestes ! "

ORESTES.

Thy dreams have come from Jove. Behold Orestes !

CLYTEMNESTRA.

It is—it is ! The Father lives again !
The Dead have risen ! Well, I quail not yet !
Strike ! ——

CASSANDRA (*within*).

Blood — more blood !

ORESTES.

And art thou then prepared ?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

I am. If I must die no common hand
Shall from the violated shrine of life
Expel the soul that Clytemnestra took
From sires that trod the heavens — I *am* prepared.
Son of Atrides strike. I bare the bosom
On which thy head hath nestled, from whose fountain
Thy lips drew rosy life.

ORESTES.

O Gods ! support me !

One moment more : but say that thou repentest ;
But say that thou wert passive in his death,
A husband's death : say that thy hand at least
Was not so guilty as thy wishes.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Never !

What I have done was crime, but of such grandeur
As doth become a crown. I slew thy Father ;

But for that love which is itself a glory,
And for a sceptre which no power but Death's
Shall ravish from my hand.

[*He lifts his sword. (She looks at him steadfastly, and adds)*
Now strike! — *My Son!*

[*He drops it again.*

[*Shouts without, near and loud; alternate cries of*
“*This for Ægisthus!*” — “*Vengeance and Orestes!*”
“*Down with the tyrant!*” — “*Argos and the Queen!*”

Enter PYLADES.

PYLADES.

Haste, haste, Orestes! While before the gates
The Usurper's hirelings from the citadel
Are mustering strong, we have made good our entrance
By the unguarded postern. Here, within
Thy Father's tomb, the veteran iron men
He led shall crown the son. Complete *thy* work;
And bid me stay all treason by the cry
That Crime herself is dead.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Save me, Orestes,
From the polluting gripe of meaner hands.
I kneel, but not for mercy. Spare the life
Of him — Ægisthus! and my dying eyes
Shall look upon thee with a passionate pardon.
For I who fear'd thee, fear'd thee for *his* sake.
But, gazing on thee now, sweet memories rise
From the pale fountain of the Past; and — oh!
I am again thy mother!

ORESTES.

Mighty Nature,
Thy voice alone stirs through the solemn space.
Justice is dumb. My mother! oh, my mother!

[*Lifts and clasps her to his heart, then starting away.*
What have I done! Betray'd, betray'd my father;
Clasp'd to my heart his foe, and with weak tears
Wept on the breast of Murder. Speak not! Hence!
Haste to the temples. Summon priest and seer,
Perform lustrations, bend before the Gods,
Go — go — repent — and live —

CASSANDRA (*suddenly drawing aside the curtains.*)

To mourn Ægisthus!

Lo, the Wolf mangled in the self-same lair
In which the Lion fell.

[CLYTEMNESTRA *pauses, looks on ORESTES, and
rushes with a shriek to the body of ÆGISTHUS.*

PYLADES.

Think'st thou that tears

Wash out a father's blood?

ORESTES.

Thou too! fie, fie!

CASSANDRA.

Ha! ha! doom'd recreant! Hast thou then escaped
The meshes of the Inexorable Fate?
No! while I speak the vision rushes o'er me.
I see the blood — the corpse — the Avenging Furies!
All hail! ascend thy throne! All hail, Orestes,
Sovereign of Argos, Deathsman of thy mother!

ORESTES.

Silence, wild Bird of Hell!

Enter Soldiers of ÆGISTHUS.

SOLDIERS.

The Queen — the Queen!

[CLYTEMNESTRA *turns her face to them.*

FIRST SOLDIER.

Pardon, my royal mistress. From the gates
The crowd are beaten back: we only need
Thee and Ægisthus.

PYLADES.

What! Are ye Greeks? Look round! What walls are these?
Whose tomb? Behold Orestes! the lost son
Of him whose captains were the Kings of Greece!
Greeks! Dare you strike Orestes?

FIRST SOLDIER.

If it be so ——

PYLADES.

If—if. Go, ask yon thing that *was* a Queen.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

That *was*—that is a Queen! [*again sinking.*

Adored Ægisthus,

Thou for whose sake these hands were steep'd in blood—

Thou—whom our very crime had placed aloof

From all the world—the only living eyes

That did not loathe the Adulteress—they have slain thee,

And offer life to *me!* (*kisses his hands.*)[*Shouts without. "Death to all tyrants!
This way—this way—Orestes—Victory!"*

FIRST SOLDIER.

Hark!

Stand firm—the Foe!——

Enter CREON and the party of ORESTES.

CREON.

All hail, the King Orestes!

CASSANDRA.

Tarry yet—

The last step is not mounted!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Who dares mock

Argos with phantom sovereigns while the earth

Holds Clytemnestra? Seize on the impostor:

Down with yon rebels! What—what—all turn'd dastards?

[*Snatches a sword from one of her soldiers.*

Then learn from women, thus—how thrones are saved

Even when subjects fail.

HER SOLDIERS.

The Queen and Argos!

ORESTES.

Forbear! Pour not one drop of innocent blood

Upon a sword too gentle to the guilty.

Forbear!

HER SOLDIERS.

Die, traitor!

ORESTES.

Nay then, on!—at least,
 Ye did not give me birth. Brave Pylades,
 I am a man once more! Lo, in the sight
 Of heaven and earth, and in my father's tomb,
 I claim the crown of Argos!

[*As ORESTES fronts his opponents, CLYTEMNESTRA
 suddenly throws herself on the point of his sword,
 and falls.*]

CASSANDRA.

The last step

Is past! Ascend thy throne, Orestes,
 Sovereign of Argos, Deathsman of thy mother!

ORESTES.

It was not *my* act—Gods—I did not slay her!
 It was not I!

CLYTEMNESTRA (*waiving him away*).

Back, back, pale Parricide,
 Didst thou not slay Ægisthus? In that stroke
 Thy mother died. I could have pardon'd thee
My death—not *his*. From out thy whole array
 I singled *thy* blade—that my parting breath
 Might win the right of curses! Raise me—oh!
 Oh, for one moment more! Ye solemn Sisters,
 Daughters of Night, and the primæval Hell,
 On ye, I call—hear me Avenging Furies!
 Even in his hour of triumph, while the gore
 Warm from this wound yet reeks upon his steel,
 Arise—surround—pursue the Murderer-Son!
 Let not the world know refuge for his feet;
 People the day with Spectres—in the night
 Bid Horror, with a dumb and icy stillness,
 Reign on the throne of Sleep! On earth—in heaven—
 Throughout all nature—let him but behold
 Your ever-haunting and relentless eyes—
 Hear me, Eumenides!

[*Thunder from below.*]

Hark! hark! the prayer
 Hath pierced the Shades! We are avenged, Ægisthus! [*Dies.*]

PYLADES.

So fled the fellest soul that ever blent
 The Titan's grandeur with the woman's guilt.
 My friend, Orestes, ho!—look up, be cheer'd,
 Let not the idle air of those wild words
 Freeze up thy blood.

ORESTES.

Blood—blood—who speaks of blood?

PYLADES.

Thou didst not slay her!

ORESTES.

Listen, Gods and men,

I did not slay her!

1st SOLDIER of the Queen's party.

It is true. She fell

By her own act upon thy guiltless blade.

We served her well in life—we mourn her dead—

But hail in thee the heir of Agamemnon,

And thus we proffer homage! (*Lay down their swords.*)

[*ORESTES sinks into a chair; the chiefs and soldiers gather round him in obeisance. And CASSANDRA taking from behind the curtain the crown of ÆGISTHUS places it on his head.*]

CASSANDRA.

All is done!

The Fates, whose minister I am, fulfill'd!

Now, as some blast that from the Inspiring Cave,

Vocal with oracles, sweeps, baleful, o'er

The upper earth, hurrying, men know not whither;

I pass for evermore from mortal eyes,

To seek Atrides in the Shades, and say

I placed the crown upon thy brows, Orestes,

Sovereign of Argos, Deathsman of thy mother!

[*Exit Cassandra.*]

Enter ELECTRA.

What do I see?—dead—dead—O bleeding clay!

All thy pride come to this! Alas, Orestes!

Thou didst not do this deed?

ORESTES.

Upbraid me not!

Come near me,—here!—kiss me, sweet sister. Ah,
How holy seems thy breath!—I did not slay her.

ELECTRA.

Now bless thee for those words.

ORESTES.

And yet there's blood

Upon that steel—blood in the earth—air—blood!

Ah, clasp thy arms around me. So—my heart

Feels thine, and in its calm and tender beating

Hears the Gods whisper comfort.

ELECTRA.

Back, kind friends.

Give him more air. How is it with thee?

ORESTES.

Sister,

Hold—look on me. I think thou *art* my sister!

We have no kindred left us. Bear with me.

If I am mad—for I have seen such sights

In one short hour——But we'll not talk of them!

If I am mad, let me not fright thee, sister—

Be with me—wipe the anguish from my brow,

And when all else desert me, by my side

Stand undismay'd! These *men*, I know, do love me;

But there are times when love itself looks harsh,

Save in the eyes of her the Gods call "Pity;"

But I do think on earth the name is "Woman!"

[*Solemn music from below.*]

ORESTES.

Hark, from below—around—more near!—the air

Grows cold and ghastly with the obscene presence

Of things that are not earth's. They come, they come!

[*A mist rises, gradually spreading over the back of the stage,
and separating ORESTES and ELECTRA from the rest.*

Through the mist, as it settles, the forms of the Furies, gigantic and indistinct.

Ha! where they rise—their fell lips dropping gore,
And o'er the stillness of each marble brow,
The hell-born Serpents with their thousand eyes—
O spare me, spare me! [ELECTRA takes his hand.

Ah, I feel their grasp!

It—No! This hand has warmth—Heaven bless thee, sister!
There—there—what seest thou there?

ELECTRA.

Only the mists
Of the grey dawn : be soothed.

ORESTES.

She sees them not!
In all that live, their presence blasts alone
The Murderer-Son.

ELECTRA.

Alas! alas!

ORESTES.

Away!
Over the earth, away! The Spectre-Hounds
Do track and chase me by the scent of blood.
Loosen thy grasp, Electra! Thou art spared :
Leave the Accursed Man!

ELECTRA.

Where'er thou goest
By night, by day — thro' storm and shine — in ill,
As in the good which shall be, I am with thee.

ORESTES.

Can Love in horror live?

ELECTRA.

Love—lives for ever!

A DAY AT CAMBO AND USTARITZ.

"*Ici, Messieurs!* Here's your coach, gentlemen! Drive you like the wind!" cried one fellow, collaring me and dragging me towards his vehicle.

"*Les meilleurs chevaux de tout le département; fameux goers—well-stuffed cushions—take you cheap—très bon marché!*" vociferated another sun-burnt Automedon, pulling us in the direction of a rickety carriage, to which were harnessed a couple of hungry-looking brutes with shaggy manes and tails, and a good deal more skin than flesh upon their angular carcasses.

"*Voici la Caroline, Messieurs; prenez la Caroline! — et la jolie Bayonnaise — et la Sylphide!*" shouted sundry other claimants for our custom. It was a fight who should get us; and for a time there seemed some danger of our being pulled to pieces by the numerous competitors. At last we succeeded in installing ourselves in one of the most decent-looking and best horsed of the drags; our driver slammed the door to, and putting his tongue in his cheek in reply to the French "*sacres!*" the Gascon "*Diou biban!*" and the Basque "*Arrayua!*" of his disappointed rivals, he scrambled upon his box and gathered up the reins.

"*Où donc, Messieurs?*" said he, turning round to us.

"*A Cambo.*"

A loud *Iyo!* and a crack of the whip about his horses' ears, and the next instant we rattled through the Spanish gate and out of Bayonne.

There were three of us, and a merry trio we were as ever started on a pleasure excursion upon one of the warm bright autumnal mornings of southern France. Imprimis, there was a Frenchman named Paul Rouget, whose acquaintance I had made at the baths of Luchon some six weeks previously, since which time we had been fast friends and constant companions. He was an artist, and had been wandering about the south of France nearly the whole summer, fancying he was sketching, but in reality passing his days in making love to all the pretty women he met with; and his nights, or at least a fair slice of them, in getting—not tipsy—but just into that comfortable state when a man feels himself in perfect harmony and good fellowship with all creation. An uncommonly jolly fellow he was, that Rouget, as ever I encountered, a perfect model of a jovial, warm-hearted Frenchman, a character one does not meet with every day of one's life. His fun and humour were inexhaustible, his spirits never flagging, his good temper invariable. He was about thirty years of age, a little inclined to the rotund and corpulent, owing to long sittings—at the easel, as he said; at the table, as I opined—with a big head and broad shining face, clean shaved except a pair of long

black moustaches comically twisted at the ends, and which he thought it incumbent upon him to wear in his capacity of artist. My other companion was one Alick Maxwell, an old friend who had accompanied me from Paris on a trip to the French baths; a Scotchman of course, from the name, lean and long-shanked, slightly pock-marked, and with a head of hair bordering on the fiery; as dry as a bannock both in appearance and manner, but possessed withal of a certain fund of dry humour which occasionally flashed forth, and was the more relished for its rarity.

Did you ever visit Cambo, friend reader? I dare say not, probably never heard of such a place. Be it known unto you then, and to all whom it may concern, that at a distance of half a score miles from Bayonne, and of a quarter of an hour's walk from the sunny banks of the pleasant river Nive, stands a straggling village consisting of a dozen or two dwellings, amongst them a couple of *auberges* or country inns of modest pretensions, and three or four equally unpretending lodging-houses. This is Cambo, from its secluded position the least known of the Pyrenean baths, but which nevertheless possesses iron and sulphur springs, that in the season attract numerous visitors from Bordeaux, Bayonne, and the north-western provinces of Spain. From a stone fountain in the lower part of the village flow the healing waters, the virtues of which are doubtless aided by the pure air and wholesome country diet enjoyed by those who sojourn at this agreeable little bathing place.

Nothing in the world more charming in its way than the road from Bayonne to Cambo — wooded and winding, with occasional glimpses of the river, and still more frequent ones of some marshes overgrown with bulrush, and much esteemed by sportsmen as the winter resort of innumerable teal and duck. Masses of rock of a bluish grey colour rising in various fantastical and picturesque forms, and towering over the road — waste land covered with lofty fern and sprinkled with clumps of mountain ash, with its graceful foliage and bright scarlet berries — and here and there some verdant patch of grass, the green of which is preserved of an emerald freshness by a streamlet flowing through it on its way to the Nive. Then, at the end of the drive, the pretty village of Cambo with its whitewashed habitations and trim gardens, the central point from which radiate a multitude of sunny lanes and country roads smelling of honeysuckle and briar rose, and almost every one of them leading to some delightful point of view. Our dinner ordered at the inn, we proceeded to ramble through these paths of pleasantness, Rouget doubly armed with a voluminous sketch-book and a leathern case capable of holding half a hundred cigars. Unfortunately for the interests of art, however, he made more use of the latter than of the former receptacle. From time to time, to be sure, tempted by the beauty of the scenery, he would pause in admiration, indulge in a rapturous tirade, establish himself on a green bank or overgrown molehill, produce his book and cut his pencil. For two or three minutes he sketched away most perseveringly, but then — alas for the frailty of human resolutions! — the sun was in his eyes, or he thought he could find a better place, or he felt it

absolutely necessary to smoke a cigar; in short, so numerous were his interruptions of himself, that when at three o'clock we returned to the Cerf, as the little inn was called, to see if our provender were ready, he had sketched on one page a tree, on another a cottage roof, on a third the outline of a hill; but nothing was finished, excepting half a dozen cigars.

At the inn, great was the surprise reserved for us. We had not anticipated anything very special in the way of a dinner; the *pot-au-feu de rigueur*, a Nive trout or salmon, and perhaps a bit of roast kid or sheep, were all we had ventured to hope for. We were mightily astonished, therefore, when we saw spread before us a repast that no hotel amongst the many excellent ones of Bearn, Gascony, and Languedoc need have been ashamed to acknowledge. Soup, delicious fish cooked to perfection, ortolans (a common delicacy in that country), that drew tears of delight from Rouget's eyes; *sautés*, *mayonnaises*, and *soufflés* in a never-ending profusion; such was our bill of fare. Heaven knows by what chance such a consummate *artiste en cuisine* as the one who compounded all these savoury dishes unquestionably was, found himself in the modest inn of an insignificant Basque watering-place. It must have been some disciple of Ude, who had been crossed in love and had retired from the world to nourish a hopeless passion in the desert, and assuredly if he fed his flame half as well as he did us, there was no danger of its expiring in a hurry. And then the wine: we had reckoned on country wine, or a bottle of so-so Bordeaux at most. Maxwell, encouraged by the excellence of the edibles, ventured to ask for Champagne. "Gooseberries!" said I. Rouget heaved a sigh. The silver-crowned bottle appeared. Shades of Moët and Vandervecken! *Œil de Perdrix*, and of the best! Rouget put his lips to the glass and then held it up to the light, contemplating it with infinite tenderness, and watching the topaz-like beads that rose from the bottom of the sparkling liquid to disappear upon reaching the surface. He again placed the glass upon the table and folded his hands over his stomach in silent thankfulness. But he said nothing; he was evidently overpowered by his feelings.

Upon reaching Cambo we had sent away our carriage, our intention being to return to Bayonne on foot in the cool of the evening. We had reckoned, however, without our host, or rather without his dinner. We started, to be sure, an hour before sunset, and progressed very valiantly as far as Ustaritz, a village on the banks of the river, not on the direct road to Bayonne, but by which we had agreed to pass for the sake of varying our route. Thence we were to follow the stream for a mile or more, till we reached the fishing station. That part of the Nive abounds in salmon, and at about half an hour's walk from Ustaritz the fishers have their post, opposite to a small grass-covered island in the centre of the river. There is a hamlet of wooden huts, or rather kennels, built on the shore, where they keep their nets, and in which some of them sleep. They are fowlers as well as fishermen, and catch vast numbers of larks and other small birds, which are sent to the Bayonne market. We were desirous, Maxwell and myself, that is to say, of reaching this fishing colony before dark, in hopes

of being in time to witness the capture of some of the finny or feathered tribes. Rouget also had that morning declared himself very anxious to see their mode of fishing and bird-catching; but he now gave us an opportunity of observing the vast difference there is, as Maxwell expressed it, between a full man and a fasting. At the close of a lecture that lasted from Cambo to Ustaritz, and that had for subject the disadvantages of walking so soon after dinner, the illustrious painter declared it was utterly impossible he should proceed beyond the latter village. He dwelt in terms of great enthusiasm upon the delights of a morning walk to Bayonne, expatiated on the comfortable appearance of the Etchechurria, a Basque inn near the river, and finally, professing himself enormously struck by the charming view to be obtained from the said inn, pulled out his sketch-book in desperate haste, and set to work to make the best use of the hour of daylight that remained. The view was pretty enough, certainly; and in its contemplation Maxwell and myself forgot for some moments our wish to reach Bayonne that night. We were still on the left bank of the river, which was traversed at that point by the wooden bridge of Ustaritz. The country opposite to us was exceedingly picturesque, and highly characteristic of the district of the lower Pyrenees; the land rough and broken, sloping up from the water, and divided by low hedges into large pastures on which goats and cattle were grazing. Scattered over these fields were the *bordes* or houses in which the flocks are sheltered for the night, built of grey stone, and situated on some rising ground, whence the shepherd can observe during the day the proceedings of his charge without interrupting his usual occupation of stocking-knitting. Here and there the country was intersected by ravines and watercourses, and varied by large waste patches, sprinkled with fragments of rock and overgrown with fern and wild fennel that shot up to the height of four or five feet. In the background were mountains, covered for the most part with dwarf oaks, and at the foot of these hills might be distinguished the white cottages of the village of Urcuray, and the square church-tower of Hasparren.

We stood for a short space contemplating this pleasant landscape, lighted up as it was by the mellowed rays of the setting sun. The only sounds audible were the faint tinkling of some sheep-bells, the distant creaking of a bullock-cart, and—a less pastoral noise—the scratching of Rouget's pencil, as it flew, at railway pace, over his paper.

"You'll be coming home when you've done that, Rougy?" said Maxwell, in his broad Scotch accent.

Rouget looked him vacantly in the face. The fact was, Maxwell spoke French decently enough, but either through absence of mind or a contempt for the foreign lingo, he invariably addressed Frenchmen in English, and usually even repeated what he had to say two or three times, before it seemed to occur to him that he would be better understood if he used the language of the country he was in.

"You'll be coming home just now, Mister Rougy?"

Rouget shook his head and looked to me for an explanation. He had been mightily puzzled on first acquaintance by Maxwell's dry,

taciturn, and somewhat odd manner; and although he never made any comment on it to me, I saw that he considered my Scotch friend as a sort of *lusus naturæ*, something between a savage and a lunatic, and whom he treated with the species of kind forbearance he might have shown to a Hottentot. Certainly there could not well exist a greater contrast than between the silent, unpolished, but excellent Maxwell, who seemed to have inherited from some Covenanting ancestor an unusual show of stiff reserve and formality, and the wild volatile Frenchman who did and said every thing that came into his head, but yet, guided as he was by his good heart and innate gentlemanly feeling, never either said or did anything hurtful to others or discreditable to himself.

I had no greater fancy than Maxwell for remaining the night at Ustaritz. Our united baggage did not amount to so much as a tooth-brush, and moreover, not having indulged so copiously as Rouget in the good things of the Cambo hostelry, I felt myself perfectly disposed to take and enjoy an evening walk into Bayonne. I therefore applied myself seriously to induce the Frenchman to proceed, but it was in vain. He urged such multitudinous and comical reasons for remaining where we were, sketching all the while as if his life depended on it and till the perspiration actually ran down from his forehead, that Maxwell and I were unable to answer his arguments for laughing, and at last gave in, fairly beaten. By the time that this occurred the sun had set and the full moon was shedding its flood of white light upon the waters of the Nive. The air was full of sweet smells from the neighbouring fields and woods, no wind was stirring, the fireflies were darting to and fro, their usually brilliant flame reduced to a pale bluish spark by the brightness of the moonbeams. It was one of the most delicious evenings I ever beheld, and even the Epicurean Rouget seemed touched and silenced by the tranquil loveliness of the scene. He was not the man, however, to indulge long in pensive or poetical imaginings.

"*Une idée!*" cried he suddenly. "An idea, and a superb one! Wait here till I return."

And with these words he started off as fast as his *embonpoint* and the reminiscences of his dinner would allow him, and presently disappeared from our sight within the portals of the inn known by the unpronounceable name of the Etchechurria, which meaneth, being interpreted, the White House. In a few moments he came forth again followed by two sturdy Basque women bearing a table and seats, while he himself was loaded with a basket containing a bottle and glasses.

"Not so badly thought of, for a Frenchman," said Maxwell.

And in half no-time we had established ourselves on the chairs, with glasses at our elbows and cigars in our mouths, looking out upon the bright moonlit landscape and chatting of things past, present, and to come. Rouget, it is scarcely necessary to observe, did by far the largest share of the talking. The fellow's volubility and versatility were really miraculous and exceedingly amusing. He hopped from one subject to another, going deep into none of them, but still

having something amusing to say on each, and saying it well. Frenchmen have a great knack at talking : their language, although meagre and deficient in energy, is perhaps better adapted than any other for ordinary conversation ; they are fond of society, and such among them as take the trouble occasionally to read something besides one of their incendiary newspapers, and to rub off their prejudices by a little foreign travel, make very entertaining companions. Rouget had had those advantages. He had travelled a great deal, if any man can in these days be called a great traveller whose ramblings have been confined to one quarter of the globe. He had been frozen at St. Petersburg and melted at Naples, had drunk sherbet at Constantinople and sherry in the vineyards of Xeres, had climbed up Swiss mountains and steamed down German rivers. He was of an inquiring turn of mind, and whilst upon his travels had made it a rule to see every thing that was allowed to be seen and occasionally things that were forbidden. This propensity had led him into various adventures both agreeable and disagreeable, but for the most part comic, or rendered so by his way of relating them. Upon this evening, however, his vein was rather argumentative and physiological than narrative, and the subject upon which he showed a disposition to expatiate was a very favourite one with him, namely, the new or rather the revived doctrine of Mesmerism. In this he was a firm believer. At Paris he had witnessed the experiments and studied the very remarkable book of a well-known professor of that science, and he declared to us that it was his firm intention, upon his return to the metropolis, to apply himself seriously to the investigation of animal magnetism, and if possible to have the various phenomena of *clairvoyance* elicited and exemplified in his own person. He had an idea that he should be a particularly good subject for the magnetizers, being naturally disposed to somnambulism. This, Maxwell and I knew to be a fact, having witnessed at Pau, nearly a month previously, a most laughable example of Rouget's somnambulatory propensities. At the hotel at which we were stopping he had one night got up in his sleep and taken several turns up and down the gallery upon which his room-door opened. On returning to bed, however, he had mistaken the door and entered the apartment of a pursy old Englishman who had arrived at Pau the day before, on his way to some bathing place or other to which his *medico* had despatched him for the cure of his gout. Rouget installed himself very comfortably by the side of the invalid, who soon, roused from his slumbers by this unexpected bed-fellow, alarmed the whole house by his cries of thieves and murder. The scene of confusion that ensued, the fury of the frightened Englishman, and the consternation of poor Rouget at the mistake he had committed, were, as may be supposed, ludicrous in the extreme.

It was past eleven before we could make up our minds to abandon our pleasant station upon the banks of the moonlit river and betake ourselves to the excellent beds that had been prepared for us. French inns are not generally remarkable for their cleanliness. Even in the luxurious capital a vast many of the hotels have much to be desired in that respect, and, proceeding southwards, the evil augments in pro-

portion as one approaches those regions of heat and vermin, Spain and Italy. But the small corner of France known as the Basque country is a striking exception to this unwholesome rule. Nothing can exceed the active and indefatigable cleanliness of Basque inn-keepers and servants; the exquisite whiteness of the linen, the freedom of the apartments from the smallest speck of dust; the scrubbed and polished floors and the shining neatness of the kitchens and their apparatus, can hardly be surpassed in England or Holland, —the countries of all others where dirt is held in the greatest abhorrence. Notwithstanding, however, the well-stuffed mattresses and the snowy sheets, smelling of lavender and wild flowers, with which my bed was decked, I found it impossible to close my eyes for a long time after retiring to rest. I was at that period accustomed to take a great deal of exercise, and perhaps the circumstance of my having that day walked very little rendered me less disposed to sleep. I had lain awake for nearly three hours and was just dropping off into a doze when I was startled by a loud and shrill scream that seemed uttered within a hundred yards of the house. I raised myself on my elbow and listened, but the noise was not repeated. I was habituated to the ear-piercing yells and cries of the Basque mountaineers, and supposing the sound I had heard to proceed from some passing boatman descending the river from Bidarre with his cargo of tiles, I attached no importance to it, but turned round upon my pillow and was soon in a deep sleep.

The sun was shining brightly through my room windows when I was awakened upon the following morning by the entrance of Maxwell.

"Have you seen Rouget?" said he.

"Not since last night," I replied, rubbing my eyes in the drowsy confusion of ideas attendant upon a first awakening.

"What can have become of the creature?" said Maxwell. "He is nowhere to be found."

"Have you been into his room?" inquired I.

"To be sure I have. I am just come from it and I was there ten minutes ago, but he is clean vanished. The people of the inn have seen nothing of him."

"He is gone to take a walk and finish his sketch," I suggested.

"I should have thought so too, for the servants tell me they found the house-door open this morning, but it cannot be, for his clothes are lying by his bed-side."

I did not know what to make of this strange circumstance and proceeded hastily to dress, puzzling my head the while what could have become of our companion. My toilet was nearly completed, when we heard a noise of voices outside the house. Maxwell threw open the window and stepped out upon the wooden balcony. As he did so a loud exclamation of horror burst from his lips. I hastened to his side, and to my inexpressible surprise and grief saw four peasants approaching the inn bearing upon a rude stretcher the lifeless body of Rouget. A coarse brown cloak partly covered him, but his head and the upper part of his body were exposed. His shirt was torn and

wringing wet, and his long black hair was tangled and soiled with weeds and sand. He had been several hours dead.

It was some time before we could understand and account for all the circumstances attending the death of our unfortunate friend. By putting various signs and indications together, we at last explained it thus. He had risen in the night in one of the sleepwalking fits to which he was subject, had descended a short flight of stairs leading directly from the door of his room to that of the house, which latter was fastened, as is usual in that country, by a single wooden bolt easily drawn back. The house-door, as already mentioned, had been found open in the morning. He had then, probably under the influence of a dream, walked down to the spot on which we had passed the preceding evening, which was exactly opposite the inn, and close to the brink of a sort of natural quay rising perpendicularly about seven or eight feet from the surface of the river. He must have walked straight over this quay into fifteen feet of water, and, not being able to swim, had been instantly carried away by the stream, which is there very strong and rapid. The shriek that I had heard in the night was doubtless the cry of agony of the unfortunate sleep-walker: The current had swept him down as far as the island opposite the fishing station, on the sandy shore of which his body was found by the peasants who brought it to the inn.

If the fag-end of an old ditty says true,

—— All over the wide world around,
Wherever we go good fellows are found :

And so they are, no doubt, more or less plentiful, perhaps, according to the spirit and temper in which we seek them ; but were they fifty times as numerous, so good a fellow and pleasant a companion as Paul Rouget might well be missed from their ranks. So thought Maxwell and I, as we followed him to his stranger's grave in the moss-grown little churchyard of Ustaritz. May the turf lie light upon him !

EPIGRAM

ON THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO THE CITY.

BY A TRADESMAN OF CORNHILL.

Sure the measure is strange
That all Commerce so stops,
And to open a 'Change
Makes us shut up our shops !

OUR FAMILY :

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MYSTERY.

OUR family was in bed. My mother had sobbed herself to sleep; my father lay dreaming by her side; the twin infants were in their cradle; the whole house was quiet, excepting only the ticking of the old clock in the hall, the chirping of the cricket in the kitchen, and a dull intermitting sound from one of the upper bed-rooms, as if from somebody imitating through his nose the croaking of a frog in the fens.

The clock had struck one, and was about to strike again, when the door of the back attic opened, and Kezia stepping forth in her night clothes, and without any candle, walked deliberately down the stairs to the door of the room in the first floor appropriated to the nursery. Here for a moment she paused, the attraction within having overcome or diverted her original impulse; but her true errand speedily recurred to her, and descending the other flight, she crossed the hall, and entered the surgery, to the extreme alarm and astonishment of the two persons who were conversing therein.

The one was a female in a flannel wrapper, tied with green ribbon, and occupying the wooden arm-chair devoted to the accommodation of patients or impatientes awaiting the making up of their prescriptions: the other, a strange man, with his hat on, was seated on the counter, whence, with his elbows resting on his knees, he stooped down towards his companion, his face close to hers, in earnest communion. At a glance, he was what was called in the slang of those days a Blood or Buck; in the cant of our own times, a Swell. Cigars were not yet in vogue; or, to a certainty, he would have had one between his lips: but he wore his beaver with the rakish jaunty air still affected by gentlemen and journeymen who conceive themselves superior in acuteness, spirit, and an extensive knowledge of life, to the rest of the world. His clothes were expensive and fashionable. Round his throat he wore a very fine white cravat, so ample that his neck seemed poulticed, the ends being tied in a large ostentatious bow. His coat was blue, with fancy gilt buttons, a deep turned-

down collar, and lappels, that for size might have served for ears to a Newfoundland dog. His waistcoat, of buff or primrose colour, was double-breasted, long in the waist, and flapped, with a black ribbon crossing it from the left shoulder to the gold-mounted quizzing-glass in the left-hand pocket. His lower limbs were clad in grey stocking-pantaloon, tight as skin, and cased up to the well-made calf in Hessian boots, but somewhat deficient in polish, and minus one tassel. His coat, too, had the fluffy tumbled appearance of having occasionally taken its own nap with its master's on a feather-bed, or one of flock; his waistcoat was ill-washed; his pantaloons were soiled in sundry parts, and especially at the knees; and his cravat, besides its dingy hue, was wrinkled and flaccid. Altogether, there was as much of the sloven as of the beau in his costume—in his physiognomy, a corresponding mixture of the gentleman and the reprobate. His face was handsome; but had the faded, jaded look consequent on habitual debauchery. His large dark eyes were dry and bloodshot, with crow-foot wrinkles at the corners; and under each organ a flabby bag, as if for secreting the tears to be shed in the maudlin stage of intoxication. His cheeks were of a dull white, blotched with yellow and red, that deepened in his prominent nose to a crimson. His lips were parched and cracked; his chin was neutral-tinted by a bluish beard of two days' growth; and his long black hair and whiskers were foul and matted. Smart and slovenly; well featured, but with a sinister expression; dashing, but dirty; unbrushed, unwashed, uncombed, unshorn, he looked the rake, with a strong spice of the ruffian, whose attribute, a thick knotted bludgeon, lay handy beside him on the counter. On the other side, stood something of indefinite shape tied up in a cotton shawl; and near the bundle, the nursery rushlight, and an empty rummer, with a silver spoon in it. There could hardly be a greater contrast than between the female in the arm-chair and her nocturnal visitor; and yet the time, the scene, and the manner of their tête-à-tête, inferred the most confidential and familiar intercourse. Was it possible that the repulsive, dissolute, villanous-looking man on the counter, was any thing near or dear to the genteel, sweet-spoken, well-bred, lady-like Mrs. Prideaux?

To confirm and justify an affirmative answer, certain chronological characteristics must be taken into consideration. In these, our own times, so remarkable for a refined taste in art and literature, in manners and morals, the Court Calendar possesses more attractions for females than the Newgate one. There is no longer a rage for genteel highwaymen or eminent housebreakers. As pets, Brazilian monkeys are preferred to malefactors, and parrots to jail birds. Our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters no longer admire the chivalrous courage of a horse-pad, whose utmost deed of daring — the presentment of a loaded pistol at an unarmed man — has been outdone by every light or heavy dragoon who has seen service. They no longer fall in love with a Knight of Roads for robbing them like a gentleman, and paying compliments to their beauty, and calming their feminine fears, at the cost of their purses, watches, brooches, bracelets, and finger-rings and earrings. A vulgar burglar, renowned for breaking into

houses and out of prisons, is hardly reckoned on a par with the hero of successful sieges and sorties; or an obdurate ruffian who goes to the gallows with a bold face as a rival of the gallant veteran who leads a forlorn hope. A common murderer is no longer a lady-killer to boot; nor does a dashing pickpocket triumph in female preference over a plain honest man "innocent of stealing silver spoons." But it was otherwise formerly; when, in the current phrase, a daring felon became a darling fellow, and a precious rascal a charming rogue. It was then quite usual for ladies of rank and breeding, of family and fortune, to visit condemned criminals in Newgate — entwining with fair and noble arms the neck destined to an ignominious rope, — beseeching keepsake locks from the head soon to be shrouded in an infamous night-cap; and hanging with aristocratical fondness on a plebeian body about to swing shamefully from Tyburn Tree.

Thus, as worn-out fashions descend, like cast-off clothes, from mistress to maid, the example set by a lady of quality in the time of the First George, might very well be followed by a nurse in the reign of George the Third. However, robber or rake, there was the strange man, admitted, in the middle of the night, to a mysterious interview in the surgery, the door of which opened, round the corner of the house, into a lane.

At the entrance of Kezia the parties both started, and the man would have sprung up and spoken but for the warning of the nurse, who raised one hand with its fore-finger on her lips, whilst she held him down with the other. In truth, the figure of the housemaid in its white garments, obscurely seen by the dim gleam of the rushlight, was quite spectral enough to shake the courage of a dissolute man, with nerves unsettled by drink. His frame trembled, his face turned ashen pale, and his teeth chattered as he exclaimed in a hoarse whisper —

"A stiff-un walking — by G—d!"

The nurse, with a dissenting shake of the head and her lips indicating a silent "No!" repeated her warning gesture to her companion, who, open-mouthed but breathless, watched with straining eyes every movement of the apparition. In the meantime Kezia, walking behind the counter, took her usual station beside the desk, but in silence, as if awaiting the leisure of her confidential adviser in all difficulties, Mr. Postle.

"All safe!" said the nurse in a very low but distinct whisper: "she's sleep-walking!"

The man, as if suddenly relieved of a pectoral spasm, immediately drew his breath in a long deep sigh, and set himself intensely to watch and listen to the sayings and doings of the somnambulist, who at length spoke.

"This is a dreadful mysterious business, Mr. Postle. Twenty invited, and only four to come! What can it all mean?" and she paused for a reply, which having dreamed, she resumed: —

"No, the night was not bad enough for that. Besides, the Cobleys have their own carriage, and so has the Colonel and the Squire, who would have brought the Curate along with him. Then the Biddles

have the mule cart, and the Ruffys always hire a po-shay. As for Mrs. Trent and the rest, they don't mind wind and rain, but lap up and visit in all weathers. No,—it couldn't be that! And such a beautiful supper too! And such a splendid turkey—with a giver under one wing, and a lizard under the other—I should say quite the reverse. And then the sweets! I could have cried into hysterics myself, to see all the nice jellies, and creams, and custards, and nobody to eat them, for they *was* nice—if they did taste a little of the shop, as that odious Doctor Shackle said, meaning, I suppose, the almond flavour you was so kind as to oblige me with out of the surgery."

The imaginary Mr. Postle here probably vented an oath, for which she checked him.

"Yes, he certainly is malicious—but don't imprecate. It's profane, and forbid in Scripture. Swear not at all—no, not even at an enemy or a buzzum friend. To be sure, the Doctor was very sneering and provoking, and especially about the wine being good enough to need no bush except out of our own garden. I could have found in my heart to drop a blank mangle on his medical head! And that foolish young Fitch, to affront Mr. Uncle Rumbold to his very beard, instead of having a perfect haw of it, as any one would in their senses, it makes him look so like a conjurer. And then that abominable Mrs. Spinks as wouldn't let the thing drop, but kept counting the empty chairs and saying that every one had a banker's ghost in it—Banko's I should say—I declare she made the hair stand upright on my very head. Though for that matter, I would almost as soon have seen a ghost in every seat, and Scratching Fanny among them, rather than nobody at all! I never knew such a case afore—never, except once,—and that was at my first place."

The ideal assistant of course asked for the story.

"Why, the way was this. Master had come home with a prodigious wealth of money from foreign parts, and on setting up his establishment in London, determined to give a very grand party, by way of housewarming, to his neighbours. Well, the night came, with the rooms chalked for dancing, and all lighted up with wax candles and cut glass chandeliers, and the most elegant supper set out, only for seventy people instead of twenty,—but nobody came. Nine o'clock, ten, eleven,—the same as at our own unfortunate regalia, but not a soul—not a knock or a ring, except the cook's cousin, the footman's sister, and the housemaid's brother and uncle—at least not till about twelve, when a single gentleman asked to speak with master in private, and then out it all came, for we listened at the study-door. Some spiteful person, in revenge for not being invited, had ferreted out master's secret history, and had whispered about in unanimous letters that he were a returned convert—I should have said a convict—from Botany Bay. He had been sent there for some errors in youth, but had reformed himself, and got rich by opulence, like Dick Whittington, and so got leave to come home again. But of course that don't apply to us, whom have never been arranged in court or transported, though fought as shy of by society as if we had. What is your own notion of it, Mr. Postle?"

A long silence ensued, of which the nurse took advantage to whisper to her companion, whom she beckoned with her finger, and then pointed to the door. "She must not wake and see you. Come; but move cautiously—as quiet as death."

"Is this all?" asked the man in a low grumble, and with a motion of his head towards the bundle.

"It must serve for this turn," whispered the nurse. "Quick! and away!"

The fellow instantly slid gently down from the counter and clutched the bundle, whilst the nurse turned down the rushlight in the socket. Then there was a slight rustle, with the sound of two or three hasty kisses. The next moment the outer door was partially opened—a cool gust of air came inwards, as the dark figure of the man passed outwards—the door slowly closed again, and the fastenings were replaced with less noise than is made by a mouse. The nurse then groped to the counter, where she found her candlestick and the empty rummer, but not the spoon, a loss she instantly comprehended—the bundle had not quite served for the turn—but her equanimity was undisturbed; and cautiously feeling her way out of the surgery, she crept, silent as a spirit, up the stairs to the nursery, leaving Kezia to her dreaming conference with Mr. Postle.

"Yes," she said, "there is some dreadful misfortune hanging over us, no doubt. My poor dear master! Mrs. Prideaux foretells he is a ruined man. But oh! Mr. Postle!"—and the tears oozed from her eyelids while she clasped her hands in earnest appeal to him—"whatever comes of it, don't let nothing tempt us two to leave and better ourselves, and forsake them, whose bread we eat, in their adversity. For my part, I'm ready and willing to take a solemn religious oath on my bended knees"—and she suited the action to the word—"and trust you will do the same; never, never, never to give warning, nor take it neither, but to stand by the family and do for it to my last grasp,—namely, my poor dear master and missis, and them two lovely, helpless, innocent, twin babes!"

What promise the imaginary Mr. Postle made, and whether with the prescribed ceremony, is unknown; but it gave the liveliest satisfaction to the devoted maid of all work. The expression of her features was indeed invisible in the dark to human ken; but heaven, with its starry eyes, beheld her face shining with joy and gratitude.

"The Lord bless you, dear, dear Mr. Postle, for that comfort," she said, rising from her knees, and wiping her eyes with the sleeve of her only garment. "It's exactly my own feeling and sentiments. Yes, if I was courted at this very moment by twenty prostrated lovers at my feet, with bags of gould in one hand, and vows of constancy in the other, I wouldn't change my state, but refuse them all, and live single for the sake of the family—and which reminds me it's eight o'clock, and the breakfast to make."

So saying, led by that mysterious guidance which directs the somnambulist—whether some supernatural *clairvoyance*, or more probably an internal geographical scheme, corresponding with the external locality, and producing an exquisite consciousness by touch, inde-

pendent of sight, of long familiar distances and habitual turns and windings—however, without blunder or collision, the sleeping Kezia passed hastily from the surgery, through the hall, into her kitchen, to prepare the morning meal to which she had referred. But here the guiding faculty was at fault. Besides the old furniture and utensils, on every article of which she could, blindfolded, have laid her hand, the floor was occupied by sundry novel and strange contrivances for holding the superabundant relics of the festival overnight. Against one of these extempore dressers she walked, with a force and a clatter that startled her wide awake, with one hand in a jelly, and her nose seemingly testing the sweetness of a boiled ham. The darkness, the cold, her undress, and the remembrance of former nocturnal excursions, instantly suggested the truth; her mind however retaining no trace of her recent dream; so, after a single exclamation of surprise, she quietly groped for the tinder-box, lighted a spare candle, and yawning and shivering, crept up stairs to the back garret, to get a brief rest, before the very early hour at which she regularly resumed the multifarious labours of her industrious days.

CHAPTER XVII.

A CLUE.

IN the surgery—so lately the scene of a double mystery, of a clandestine midnight meeting and unconscious somnambulism—of treacherous heartless vigilance and honest devotion faithful even in sleep—at his old desk stood Mr. Postle, apparently studying some medical work, but in reality thinking over the supper of the night before and puzzling himself to account for the absence of the guests. But his meditations were in vain: to use one of his own favourite illustrations, he might as well have tried to make a nosegay with Flowers of Sulphur.

Meanwhile, in looking at his old prompters, along the wall from shelf to shelf, with all the parade of nice-looking nastiness arranged thereon in rows of glass bottles and white jars, marked with cabalistical signs,—his eye detected one receptacle breaking the uniformity of the series by being turned with its label to the wall. But he did not need to see the gilt scroll to know its inscription—"Tinct. Opii."

"Confound that idiot!" he muttered. "He will poison himself yet with his sweet tooth and his tastings. I can trace the mark of his wet finger on the bottles and drawers like the track of a snail. Only yesterday I had to teach him that Ferrum Tart. does not stand for pastry, nor Cerat. Plumb. for almonds and raisins,—and now he has been at the laudanum!"

For once, however, Catechism Jack was mistakenly accused. No finger of his, wet or dry, had approached the dangerous narcotic. Another meddler, rather sharp than dull of intellect, had removed the stopper for a less innocent purpose than to test the flavour of the

tincture. The dear Twins owed their very sound sleep in the night to a minute dose from that displaced bottle.

The assistant carefully rectified its position, and returning to his desk began, with pen and ink, to sketch—another of his habits—on the quire of blotting paper before him, his designs being generally of the anatomical class, outlines of bones, muscles, and organs, rarely deviating into landscape or rather scraps of foliage, and even then what was meant for a tree resembled rather a drawing of the Vena Porta or Vena Cava, with its branching veins. This time, however, his subject was the human face, not dissected, but in its natural state; and as very commonly happens to artists, fine or unfine, the features took the form and expression of a countenance remotely present to his thoughts, so that without any premeditated portraiture, he had just achieved a rather striking but ugly likeness of Doctor Shackle, when a shadow fell across the paper, and looking up, he beheld the original of the picture standing right before him.

The Doctor was accompanied by a Mr. Hix, a parish official, and a very active one—but especially notable for a double propensity to turn private business into public, and public business into private—at once an indefatigable meddler in, and advertiser of, the personal concerns of his neighbours, and the uniform advocate of select vestries, secret committees, private reports, sealed books, suppressed accounts, the exclusion of reporters, and closed doors. Indeed, so far did he carry this love of mystery that, when certain parochial notices were to be posted, according to law, for the benefit of the community at large, he was said to have seriously recommended their being pasted up with their printed sides to the wall.

The ostensible errand of Doctor Shackle was merely to ask, in a friendly way, after the heads of the family, and how they had passed the night after the trying disappointments they had endured: an inquiry urged with such seeming interest, that in the absence of any authentic bulletin, Mr. Postle deemed it expedient to fetch my father himself to reply personally to the application.

His back was no sooner turned, than Shackle, reaching his long arm over the low rail in front of the desk, snatched up something which he exhibited to his companion—namely, a fragment of French grey cloth in one hand, and in the open palm of the other two silver-washed nails. The pantomime that followed was silent, but expressive.

"Do you see these, and understand what they mean?" asked the fixed significant look of the Doctor, as plainly as in words.

"I do," replied the intelligent nod of Mr. Hix.

The Doctor raised his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders. *"Could there be a clearer case?"*

The Churchwarden shook his head, and made a grimace.—*"Nor a more ugly business."*

"I'm sorry for it—very!" said Shackle, hastily replacing the cloth and nails on the desk, and then suddenly turning his back on them, and fixing his eyes on a large glass jar full of snow-white magnesian bricks, as if projecting how to build with them some castle in the air.

So intensely, indeed, was he occupied with this ideal fabric, as not to be aware of the entrance of my father, till the latter came close up to him, and shook him cordially by the hand. Then he awoke, and how delighted he was or said he was, to find my father not merely as well but better than could have been expected, after the late untoward events—a series of disappointments borne, he must say, with an equanimity worthy of the palmy days of the Stoic Philosophy.

"Had it been my own case," said Shackle, "to say nothing of the dead convivial failure, yet to meet with such a slight from the whole neighbourhood, as it were—the cut wholesale as well as direct—I really think, with my own more sensitive, irritable temperament, I should either have gone there,"—and he pointed to the laudanum bottle—"for oblivion, or there"—and he indicated another drug—"for annihilation."

"No, no," said my father, "you know better. And besides, there was no great stoicism needed in the matter. A medical man, and a Christian, who had walked the hospitals and the poor-house, and seen human misery and anguish in all their complicated shapes, and who could not bear such a petty mishap,—provoking as I confess it was—would be a disgrace to his profession and his religion. As to the absence of our friends, no doubt it will be accounted for."

"No doubt," said Dr. Shackle.

"For the rest," continued my father, "the worst we are threatened with is to be cloyed with sweets for a few days to come, or surfeited with cold victuals; evils for which between young folks and poor ones, we may easily find a remedy."

"I am glad to find you so well armed against trouble," said Dr. Shackle; "and wish I had a little of your philosophy. I have equal need of it—for we are likely to be mutually involved in a very disagreeable business."

"A parochial, and perhaps a public business," said Mr. Hix. My father looked enquiringly from one speaker to another.

"The short of the matter is this," said Dr. Shackle. "You have heard, of course, of the pauper family, who gave their dead child that ridiculous funeral?"

"The Hobbesees," said Mr. Hix. "Indulged themselves with a genteel burial—and on our books for three shillings a week!"

"Yes, inconsistent enough," said my father. "I was accidentally an eye-witness of the procession."

"Well," said Shackle, "the grave was robbed the other night, and the child's body stolen. The whole village is in a ferment about it—the poor especially—the paupers outrageous, and the Hobbesees rampant."

"Poor things," said my father.

"Yes, poor enough," said Shackle; wilfully wresting my father's phrase of commiseration into another sense.

"And idle enough, and troublesome enough, and more than enough," added Mr. Hix.

"And scandalous enough," said Shackle, "to say that their beggarly corpses are less cared for than the carcases of brute beasts."

"The coarse expression," said my father, "of a strong but natural prejudice."

"Oh, quite natural," sneered Doctor Shackle; "and quite harmless, if their prejudices went no farther. But, as human corpses are not eaten, except by ghouls, hyænas, and beasts of prey, of which there are none in this blessed Lincolnshire, the natural inference is that graves are robbed, and bodies snatched for other than pantry purposes. In short, in their own low language, that the poor are only poked into pit-holes, to be hoked up agin, and cut and hacked about like dog's meat, by raw 'prentices and Sawboneses,—and heaven knows what vulgar libels besides."

"Well, and what then?" asked my father. "As a surgeon, you are not going, I presume, to deny the practices of the resurrectionists, or the uses to which the articles they deal in are applied?"

"Not I," said Shackle. "The thing is too notorious; and, as you say, too surgical; though I never had, directly, a finger in any cold meat pie of the kind. Probably, you have. However, the popular suspicion necessarily falls on the medical men of the place; under which category we share the odium between us: at least, pro tempore; for, as regards myself, as we doctors say, I shall very soon remove all that; and hope you are in as good case."

"Most decidedly," said my father.

"So much the better," said Shackle. "Your official connection with the poor, as parish doctor, makes your exculpation of even more importance than my own."

"There must be a parochial inquiry!" exclaimed Mr. Hix.

"Of course, with closed doors," said Shackle; unable to resist a sarcasm, even on a friend and ally—a propensity that explained his otherwise unaccountable influence in a place where so few persons liked, but so many feared him.

"In fact," he continued, "the wretches do not scruple to say that the anatomising of their remains is winked at by the workhouse authorities."

"And if we did," cried Mr. Hix, "every ounce of flesh on their bones was composed of parish victuals. There isn't a pauper dies, man, woman, or child, but in equity we have a mortgage, as I may say, on their bodies."

"That's undeniable," said Shackle. "However, the paupers are all up in arms, and declare openly that they won't work; and even that they won't die, unless assured of decent and safe interment."

"Won't die!" exclaimed Mr. Hix.

"So they say," answered Shackle.

"Won't die!" repeated the churchwarden. "That must be looked to."

My father, who had been lost in thought, here awoke from his reverie, and addressed himself to Shackle.

"Yes, Doctor, you are right. This is a very disagreeable business, and a very serious one, at least for me."

"And for the parish too," said Mr. Hix, "to have such a slur on it."

"Especially," said Shackle, "as it is not a matter that can be shelved, or cushioned, or hushed up."

"And ought not to be," said my father, "must not! Last night's mystery is now solved. I am socially excommunicated. How or why, I know not,—but a suspicion has fallen upon me, which I must remove, or give up my practice, and quit the neighbourhood. A public inquiry will be necessary, for my own sake."

"And for mine too," said Shackle.

"For all our sakes!" cried Mr. Hix. "The excitement of the lower orders will be sure to fall first on the authorities—the churchwardens and overseers. The least I expect is, to be hung or burnt in effigy, or to have my windows smashed!"

My father mechanically looked up over the surgery-door at the yellow glass globe, so often broken; and true to his misgivings, if not actually smashed, it was starred in all directions by some missile that had struck it in the centre. He pointed it out to his visitors.

"There is a token of the popular feeling—the local current that has set in against me. For some time past I have fancied myself treated with coldness and aversion by the humbler class of the inhabitants; but a clear conscience and my goodwill towards them repelled the supposition. Now, however, there is a direct imputation on me which I must at once rebut, or be a ruined man."

"The Board sits this morning," suggested Mr. Hix.

"In that case," said my father, "I will at once go before it, and clear my character. I need not say, I hope, that I am altogether innocent in the matter—as innocent as those leeches," and he pointed to the bottle—"of the blood of Julius Cæsar."

"I am truly happy to hear you say so," cried Shackle, seizing and squeezing my father's hand; "and shall be still more happy to hear you prove it."

The churchwarden expressed a similar wish, but instead of shaking hands, contented himself with a stiff bow, externally taking a simple leave of my father, but internally bidding good-bye to him, though somewhat precociously, as the parish doctor. The real functionary, in his eyes, was the medical gentleman with whom he walked off arm in arm.

"A clue at last!" cried my father to Mr. Postle, whose entrance into the surgery was synchronous with the exit of Dr. Shackle—a hint that Animal Magnetism ought properly to have two poles,—of repulsive Antipathy as well as of sympathetic Attraction. "A clue at last! We have found out the disease!" And my father imparted to his assistant the substance of the information he had just obtained.

"Say I told you so!" cried the assistant; an exclamation he would have made, however, if just informed of a shower of addled brains from the moon. "And that, then, is why we were sent last night to Coventry—to sup by ourselves! Not that they would have touched the supper if they had come—they would have fancied human brains in the blanc mange, and coagulated blood in the currant jelly. Yes—for the future we are ghouls, vampires, carrion vultures—and nobody

will come near us. There is nothing that unscientific people are so squeamish about as violating graves and desecrating their remains—though why the suspicion should fall on us, more than on Doctor Shackle, he knows best. If any one wants a refresher in anatomy, he does. And what, sir, do you mean to do?"

"Confront the report," said my father. "Go before the Board and demand an inquiry. Is not that always the best course—to take the bull by the horns?"

"Perhaps so—except you're run at by a polled cow," answered Mr. Postle. "For my part I'd as soon go at once at Farmer Nokes's bull with a board over his eyes, with 'beware' upon it. It's the Board, or a parcel of it, that wants to get you out, and have Shackle in your place."

"I don't—I can't—I won't believe it!" cried my father.

"As you please," said Mr. Postle. "If *they* don't, the paupers will, which comes to the same thing. I know them well: when the poor once catch a prejudice in their heads, it's as obstinate as ring-worm. I lost my own practice by it when I was a doctor on my own account. My patients were mostly provincials of the lower and middle class, but all brutally ignorant, and of course superstitious, and devout believers in witchcraft. And how do you think I lost them? By a joke,—sir, a mere joke—through telling a credulous old woman,—ass as I was!—that I could show her Mindererus's Spirit, dancing with Saint Vitus, round Saint Anthony's Fire!"

"But surely a jest," said my father, "might have been explained."

"Not it," said Mr. Postle. "To the vulgar, a doctor with his hieroglyphics on his bottles, and his Latin, is already half a conjuror, and I had made myself a necromancer outright. There was no revoking it. You may make an ignorant stomach give up its poison, but an ignorant faith never gives up a legend it has once swallowed."

"I should like to hear your definition of an ignorant stomach," said my father, straying, as he was too apt, from serious matters after a whim.

"We are likely to know practically," answered the assistant, in a gloomy tone, "if ignorance and emptiness be synonymous, as they are in the head; for I don't suppose, as the practice goes, that the Board will board us."

"That's true," said my father. "I must go to the workhouse." And with a smile at the unintentional equivoque, he put on his hat, and set out for the parochial meeting.

Had he delayed a minute longer, he would have been startled and stopped by a sound ringing in his own house from hall to attic,—that sudden shrill cry which only comes from a female in distress, anguish, or alarm,—and electrifies the hearer like a flash of lightning turned from visible into audible. As it flew first from the kitchen to the surgery close at hand, Mr. Postle was soonest at the spot, where, close to the ironing-board, the moveable supports of which she had knocked away in her fall, lay Kezia in a strong hysterical fit, in the middle of a chaos of crockery, glasses, decanters, knives, forks, tongue, cold fowls, tarts, salad, cakes, and jellies,—amidst which she kicked

and struggled like a passenger desperately swimming, or trying to swim, from the wreck of some well-provisioned steamer.

Having dashed into her face the first water at hand, the assistant stepped back into the surgery for the *Sal. Vol.* or *Liq. Vol. C. C.*, but with so much professional deliberation — knowing such fits may be safely left to run their course — that when he returned to the kitchen, he found the patient propped up against the wall, in a sitting posture, between Mrs. Prideaux and Uncle Rumbold, the first loosening the sufferer's dress, and the last, having lent a hand in her removal, gazing calmly on, very like a bearded Turk confiding in Predestination, and still more like himself "trusting to Nature." Mr. Postle nevertheless plied the stimulants.

"One more application of the restoratives," said Mrs. Prideaux, "and she will revive. There! — she is resuming her senses."

As she spoke, the colour began to return to the claret-bald cheeks of Kezia, who, after a gasp or two, opened her eyes — sneezed — stared at each person in turn, — then suddenly turned pale again — closed her eyes — clasped her hands wildly together — and shrieking "the plate! the plate!" relapsed into insensibility.

The restorative process was again applied, and with success. The maid-of-all-work, after a short struggle, sprang up, as if galvanised, on her feet; and amidst gulps, sobs, broken ejaculations, and distracted gestures, informed her audience by bits and snatches that "there had been thieves in the house, — and Mr. Ruffy's silver tankard — and the Reverend Curate's silver-gilt salts — and all Mrs. Trent's school spoons — were missing!"

Poor faithful, devoted Kezia! No hand had she in that felonious abstraction; and yet, for all her innocence, how fearfully within the range of suspicion, whilst Guilt stood by in comparative safety, without a tremor in her silvery voice, or a faltering in her correct carriage! Had some wakeful ear, startled by the unseasonable issuing of the housemaid from her bedroom, heard her descending the stairs, marked her passage from hall to surgery, from surgery to kitchen, and recognised, by listening, her voice in conversation though but with a shadow, and then her stealthy retreat before dawn to her own attic, she was in all human probability a lost, undone, ruined creature. Like other Somnambulists, who, in their nocturnal, unconscious wanderings, step, dream-led, on the narrow window-sill or perilous parapet, she had walked to the very verge of a moral precipice — would she keep her footing or fall?

THE ECHO.

It is with infinite pleasure we refer to the fulfilment, in the present Number, of a pledge made some months since to our Subscribers. The Dramatic Sketch, "The Death of Clytemnestra," will, we trust, satisfy our Readers of the sincerity of our promises in general, and of that one in particular, to which a Correspondent has referred in his culinary letter, as being composed of the proverbial materials so easily broken. His *crust*, if made of "flour, water, and butter, with a rolling-pin," had surely a strong sprinkling of that spice which Bed-reddin Hassan omitted in the cream tart.

The paper offered to us by "A. T. H." as original, is, from internal evidence, "a do" from the French. Several attempts of the same kind by parties of respectable professions, who would indignantly denounce parallel practices by itinerant hawkers, have determined us to publish at full length the names of future offenders, with the labels attached to their secondhand wares. As there are direct ways for men ambitious of literary credit or money to obtain them by fair means, the exposure of interlopers, who would divert both from their legitimate channels, will be but an act of common justice to the honest Translators who depend for a livelihood on their pens.

The arrears consequent on a long illness have left many correspondents unanswered: such as require private replies will shortly receive them; and the unsuitable articles will be found (after the 3d instant) at the Publisher's, Mr. Renshaw, 356. Strand.

HOOD'S MAGAZINE

AND

Comic Miscellany.

MRS. PECK'S PUDDING.

A CHRISTMAS ROMANCE.

"THE disappointment will be dreadful," said Mrs. Peck, speaking to herself, and looking from the dingy floor, up the bare wall, at the blank ceiling. "But how to get one Heaven only knows!"

It was the afternoon of the 24th of December. Christmas Day was at hand, and for the first time in her existence Mrs. Peck was without a plum-pudding. For years past she had been reduced in life; but never so reduced as that! She was in despair. Not that she particularly doted on the composition; but it was a sort of superstition with her that, if she failed to taste the dish in question on that festival, she should never again enjoy luck in this world, or perhaps in the next. It was a foolish notion: but many enlightened Christians cling religiously to similar opinions; for example, as to pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, or hot cross buns on a Good Friday. So with Mrs. Peck a plum-pudding on Christmas Day was an article of her faith.

Yes—she must have one, though it should prove but a dumpling of larger growth. But how? Buying was out of the question: she had not half a farthing in the house—a widow without a mite!—and stealing was not to be thought of—she must borrow or beg. Once arrived at this conclusion, she acted on it without delay. There were plenty of little emissaries at hand, in the shape of her own children, for the necessary errands—namely, Careful Susan, Dirty Polly, Greedy Charley, Whistling Dick, Little Jack, and Ragged Peter, so called from a fragment of linen that usually dangled behind him, like a ship's ensign from its stern.

"Children!" said Mrs. Peck, "I am going to have a Christmas plum-pudding."

At such an unexpected announcement, the children shouted, jumped about, and clapped their skinny hands. But their mirth was of brief duration. Second thoughts, for once none of the best, soon reminded them that the cupboard was as bare as Mother Hubbard's; while the maternal pocket was equally empty. How the thing was to happen, therefore, they knew not—unless by some such fairy feat as sent black puddings tumbling down the chimney; or some such scriptural miracle as showered quails and manna in the Wilderness; or that one, which Greedy Charley remembered to have seen depicted in blue and white on a Dutch tile, of horned cattle and sheep coming down from heaven to St. Peter, in a monster bundle. But having vainly watched the hearths, the walls, and the ceiling, for a minute or so, they gave up all such extravagant expectations. The hopes of Ragged Peter were like his nether garment, in tatters; and the dingy face of Dirty Polly looked darker than ever. There was a dead silence, at last broken by Little Jack.

"But, mammy, you have got no plums."

"And no flour," said Careful Susan.

"And no suet," said Dirty Polly.

"Nor no sugar," said Ragged Peter.

"And no almonds and orange-peel," said Greedy Charley.

"No eggs," said Careful Susan.

"And never a sarcepan," said Whistling Dick.

"As to almonds and orange peel," said Mrs. Peck, "we must do without. Our pudding will be a very plain one. That is to say, if we get it at all, for there is not one ingredient in the house. We must borrow and beg; so get ready, all of you, to run on my errands."

"Let me go for the plums, mother," said Greedy Charley; but knowing his failing, she assigned to him to plead to Mr. Crop, the butcher, for a morsel of suet. Dirty Polly was to extract a few currants and raisins and some sugar, if she could, out of Mr. Perry the grocer; Little Jack was to wheedle a trifle of flour from Mr. Stone the baker; and Careful Susan was to get three eggs of Mrs. Saukins, who did mangling in her parlour and kept fowls in her cellar. Whistling Dick undertook to borrow a saucepan; and as Ragged Peter insisted also on a commission, he was sent to hunt about the streets, and pick up a little orange peel—candied, if possible.

As the children had no promenade dresses to put on, they were soon ready. Susan merely reduced the angles of her bonnet front to something of a semicircle; and Dirty Polly, with a single tug, made her short scanty garment look a little more like a frock, and less like a kilt. She might, indeed, have washed her face, as Ragged Peter might have tucked in some dingy linen, with personal advantage; but as they were not going to a juvenile party, they waived the ceremony. Little Jack clapped on his crownless hat; Greedy Charley took his jew's harp, the gift of a generous charity-boy; Whistling Dick set up his natural pipe; and away they went, in search of a pudding by instalments.

As soon as they were gone, Mrs. Peck, having made up the fire, washed her hands and arms very clean, and then seating herself at

the round deal table, with her elbows on the board, and her chin between her palms, began to calculate her chances of success. The flour, provided Mr. Stone, and not his wife, was in the shop, she made sure of. The fruit was certain—the suet was very possible—the eggs probable—the saucepan as good as in her own hand—in short, being of a sanguine temperament, she dreamed till she saw before her a smoking hot plum-pudding, of respectable size, and dappled with dark spots, big and little, like a Dalmatian dog.

In the mean time, Charley, twanging all the way on his jew's harp, arrived at the butcher's, who was standing before the shop with his back to the road, admiring, as only butchers can admire, the rows of fat carcasses and prime joints on the tenter-hooks before him. Could that meat have known his sentiments concerning it, what proud flesh it would have been! Hearing a step behind him, and anticipating a customer, he turned round with the usual "What d'ye buy?"

"I haven't got no money to buy with," said Charley, "or else"—and looking round for the desired object, he pointed to it with his finger—"I'd buy that ere lump of suet."

"And what do you want with suet?" asked the butcher.

"If you please, sir," replied Charley, "it's for our pudding. But mother is out of money; so if you don't let her have that bit of suet, either on credit or for charity——"

"Well, what then?" said the butcher.

"Why then," said Charley, "it will be the first time in our lives that we've gone without plum-pudding on this blessed festival."

The butcher was a big florid man, bloated and reddened, as persons of his trade are said to be, by constantly imbibing invisible beef-tea and mutton-broth, or as it is called, the smell of the meat. But, although thus appropriating by minute particles the flesh and fat of sheep, oxen, and pigs, he was far from becoming a brute. He cast a kindly glance at the poor boy, who looked sickly and ill-fed, and then a triumphant one at his halves and quarters, glorious with nature's red and white, and gay with sprigs of holly, suggesting the opportune reflection that Christmas comes but once a year.

"There—take it, boy—you're welcome to it, gratis, by way of a Christmas box—and my compliments of the season to your mother."

So saying, he tossed the suet to Charley, who, forgetting in his joy to thank his benefactor, ran straight home with the treasure, as delighted as if he had just won the Prize Ox in a Beef-Union Lottery.

The success of Dirty Polly was less decisive. Before entering the grocer's shop, she took a long, longing look through the window, unconsciously nibbling at her own fingers, instead of those delicious Jordan almonds, and that crisp candied citron and orange peel—and sucking in imagination at those beautiful Smyrna figs, and Damascus dates, and French plums, so temptingly displayed in round drums and fancy boxes, with frills of tinted paper round each compartment. And there, too, were the very articles she wanted—new currants from Zante—rich Malaga raisins, or of the sun, or sultanas—with samples of sugar of every shade and quality, from a fine light sand to a coarse

dark gravel; but, alas! all ticketed at impracticable rates, in obtrusive figures! The owner had marked a price on every thing except the long twisted sticks of sugar-candy and the canes of cinnamon that leaned against the China figure. "Will he give any thing away for nothing," she asked herself, "if I beg ever so?" The China mandarin nodded his head, and she stepped in.

The grocer himself was in the shop, in his snow-white apron, busily dusting, with a clean cloth, some imaginary impurities from the polished counter. He was not a harsh man, but a particular one, scrupulously neat in his apparel, and cleanly in his person. The slovenly frock and grubby flesh of dirty Polly did not therefore prepossess him in her favour. He hastily took down a pair of dazzling bright scales and asked her what she wanted. But Polly was silent. She was haunted by those large black numerals, no figures of fun, but formidable to penniless poverty, as giants with clubs. The grocer again inquired what she wanted.

"Why then, if you please, sir," said Polly, "it's raisins, and currants, and brown sugar."

"How much of each?"

"As much, sir," replied Polly, dropping a low curtsey, "as you'll please to give us."

"Pshaw!" said the grocer.

"It's for a Christmas pudding," said Polly, beginning to whimper: "and if you don't take pity on us, we shall have none at all."

The grocer was silent, and turned away from her towards his shelves and canisters.

"Do, sir—pray do," said Polly, wringing her hands and beginning to cry, not much to the advantage of her looks, as the tears washed away the dirt in stripes; and still less when she wiped her cheeks and eyes with the skirt of a frock that was dragged with mud. Luckily the grocer's back was still turned, so that he did not see the grimy drops which fell on his bright mahogany.

"Pray, pray, pray—only a few plums and currans, and a little, a very little sugar," said Polly, between her sobs.

"There," said the grocer, turning suddenly round, and thrusting a square paper of something into her hand. "Take that, and tell your mother to make a good use of it."

In the eagerness of her joy, for the thing felt like a money-box, Dirty Polly hurried out of the shop, and sure in the absence of sugar and plums of the means of buying them, she ran home to her mother with the speed of a young heifer.

The next subject for experiment was Mr. Stone, the baker; but unfortunately Mr. Stone was from home, and his help-mate was at the desk in the shop, in charge of the pecks, quarters, and half-quarters, the fancy twists, and the French rolls. She was a little pale woman, with quick grey eyes, and a sharp-pointed nose, so sharp and pointed, that she might have drilled with it the holes in the butter-biscuits. A glance at little Jack and the receptacle he carried informed her at once of his errand.

"Flour, eh? And in that odd thing!"

"Yes, ma'am," said little Jack. "When poor daddy was alive it was one of his double nightcaps; but mammy has turned it into a flour bag by cutting off one end."

"A quartern, I suppose," said Mrs. Stone, going towards the large tin scale.

"If you please, ma'am," said Jack, "and be as good as not to let it be seconds or middlins, but the best flour."

"There then, child," said Mrs. Stone, holding out one hand with the full bag, and the other for the money.

"There's no money, ma'am," said little Jack. "Mammy's not got any. The flour isn't to be paid for."

"No, no—that won't do," said Mrs. Stone, "I'm not going to book it."

"We don't want you to," said little Jack.

"You don't?" exclaimed Mrs. Stone.

"No, ma'am," said little Jack. "I'm begging, ma'am,—it's for charity."

"In that case," said Mrs. Stone, deliberately returning the flour into the great tin scale, "charity begins at home." So saying, she tossed the empty nightcap into the blank face of the urchin, who beginning to cry, and having nothing else to wipe his eyes with, made use of the flour bag, which soon converted his woe into dough.

"It's for our Christmas pud—pud—pudding," he blubbered. "We only had a very tiddy one last year, and now there won't be none at all."

"A Christmas fiddlestick!" exclaimed Mrs. Stone. "Here, come hither, you little wretch, and I will give you something worth all the creature comforts in the world."

"Is it good to eat?" asked little Jack.

"To eat!" cried Mrs. Stone, with upraised hands and eyes. "Oh, belly gods! belly gods! belly gods!"—a singular exclamation enough for a woman who sold fancy bread and took in bakings. "When will the poor leave off hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt!"

"I don't know," said little Jack.

"No, but your mother might!" retorted Mrs. Stone. "A quartern of flour indeed! When will she ask for heavenly manna!"

"Perhaps she will," said Jack, "arter she's finished her pudding."

"There again!" exclaimed Mrs. Stone, "nothing but gluttony. But come this way;"—and she led little Jack into the parlour, behind the shop, where she first unlocked her bureau, and then opened a private drawer, "There!" she said, thrusting a paper parcel into his tiny hand—"there's spiritual food—go home, and tell your mother to feed you well with it."

Little Jack took the gift with the best bow he could make. To be sure it was not flour, but the packet might contain Embden grotts, which was better than nothing, and he was fond of gruel; so he made the best of his way home, not quite so well pleased as Greedy Charley, or Dirty Polly, but better satisfied than Careful Susan.

She had picked her way through the dirt to Mrs. Saukins's, before

whose door a spangled bantam, with a magnificent red comb and wattles, was strutting about, cocksure of possessing the handsomest feather-trousers in the whole parish; and responding at intervals with a screeching chuckle to a more distant cackle in the cellar. Accepting the hint of this bird of good omen, Susan at once ascended the steps, and walking into the mangling parlour, explained her wants to the proprietor.

"By all means," said Mrs. Saukins. "Three eggs—yes, certainly—I'll fetch 'em directly—warranted new-laid—hark! there's Polly Phemus."

"Polly who?" said Susan.

"Polly Phemus. I give female names to all my hens; and know every one by her voice. Yes, that's her—black with a white tuft—a Polish everlasting layer—she's in her nest, in the old candle-box up in the dark corner. Well—three eggs—I think you said three?—Yes, certainly—you shall have them warm, as I may say, from the hen."

"Thankee, ma'am," said Susan. "Mother can't pay for them now, but she will out of her very first money."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Saukins. "That alters the case. I'm very sorry to deny—but eggs is eggs now, and; the new laid uns fetches tuppence apiece. Besides, it's not the season, and my poultry don't lay."

"*Kuk-kuk-kuk-a-larcock!*" cried the hen in the cellar.

"*Larcock!*" echoed the spangled bantam.

"No, they don't lay!" said the unblushing Mrs. Saukins. "And if they did, my fowls pay ready money for their barley, and can't afford to give credit."

"Then you won't let us have them?" said Susan.

"It's impossible," said Mrs. Saukins. "My poultry has suffered such bad debts already. If they once knew I booked, they'd turn pale in the combs, and leave off laying directly. They've done it afore—yes—often and often. I'm very sorry I'm sure—and if it was any thing else—for example, a little mangling——"

"You're very kind," said Susan, "but we've got no linen. So you won't oblige us with the eggs?"

"Dear me, no—I said no," replied Mrs. Saukins. "My poultry is my partner, and would dissolve directly. Their terms for new-laid is tuppence a piece, cash down, or three for sixpence. That's the lowest; but to a friend I'd venture to go so far as to give one in—that one there, in the little moss basket in the window. To be sure the flies has spotted it a little, till it looks more like a thrush's, but it's a hen's—and as fresh a one as ever was broke in a basin."

"But I haven't got sixpence," said Susan.

"The more's the pity," said Mrs. Saukins, "for my hens is imperative. My mangle sometimes accommodates with credit, but my poultry won't. Birds is so cunning, and my fowls in particular. I do really believe they would know a bad shilling from a good one."

"But mother promises faithfully to pay," said Susan.

"No, no," said Mrs. Saukins. "My poultry won't take promises. They know pence from piecrust—you might offer them a bushel of promises, and promissory notes besides, without getting an egg out of them—but only show them the money, and they go off to their nestes and lay like lambs."

"There goes our pudding then!" said Susan, in a tone of deep dejection.

"Do you mean a Christmas pudding—a plum one?" inquired Mrs. Saukins.

"I do," replied Susan. "It will be the first time that we have missed having one, and mother will feel it dreadfully. It's quite a religious point with her."

"Well, that's lucky!" exclaimed Mrs. Saukins, "for if I can't oblige with the eggs for a pudding, I can favour with a receipt for making one—rich, yet economical."

"I would rather have the eggs," thought Susan: but as the pudding promised to be any thing but a rich one, and the recipe professed to be a cheap one, she thought it prudent to take advantage of the offer. Accordingly, the document having been transcribed, she put the copy in her pocket, and returned home; the least satisfied of all the foraging party with the result of her expedition.

Ragged Peter, it is true, had failed equally in his search for orange peel. Whether some elderly lady or gentleman had stepped on a piece, at the cost of a compound fracture, and so had sharpened *pro tempore* the vigilance of the police, or whether it had become the fashion to eat the rind with the fruit, there was not a morsel of it to be picked up, candied or uncandied. But to make amends for this disappointment, in passing along a street at the West End, the ragged boy had the good luck to be espied by a personage who had before time noticed him, on account of some fancied resemblance to a deceased nephew. Peter's eyes twinkled with joy as he recognised his old acquaintance in his splendid livery; and the more from remembering that at their last meeting he had been presented with some of the requisites for a plum-pudding. He crossed the road, therefore, with alacrity, in compliance with the friendly signal from the powdered gentleman at the open street-door.

The porter was a very tall and very portly man, with a very convex chest, and a very stiff frill projecting from it, from top to bottom, like a palisade to keep off all intruders on his heart or bosom. Nor was there any thing very promising to poor boys in general in his livery, blue turned up with red, and trimmed with gold lace, making him look merely a free translation of a parish beadle. Nevertheless the porter was a good-natured fellow; and his glance was genial, and his voice was kindly, as he accosted the ragged child.

"Well, young un!—Where now?—Do you remember me?"

"Yes, sir," said Peter, with a cheerful smile. "You give me once a pocket full of almonds and reasons."

"Ah, that was after our dinner-party," said the porter. "I've none to-day."

Peter sighed, and was turning away from the steps, a movement that exhibited the dilapidations in his rear, when he was recalled by the same friendly voice. Peter stopped.

"Stay here till I come back." And the gentle giant went inwards, whence he presently returned with a bundle, which he placed in Peter's arms. "There, take that—it's good stuff—and tell your mother to do her best with it."

"We shall have a pudding, anyhow," thought Peter, not doubting that the bundle of good stuff had been made up by contributions from the cook and housekeeper; wherefore, spluttering some broken thanks to the porter, he ran home with his rags fluttering in the wind, as fast as he could scamper.

The last of the adventurers was Whistling Dick. To the tune of "O where, and O where," he had successively visited the whole of his mother's friends and acquaintance—no great number in all, as often happens to a widow with a limited income—but from nobody could he obtain a loan of the indispensable culinary utensil. One had lent her saucepan already; another had burnt a hole in it; a third had it on the fire with the family dinner; a fourth had pawned it, but his mother was welcome to take it out; and a fifth, an Irish-woman, had never had any saucepan at all except the frying-pan.

"I do believe," said Dick, "if there is such things as saucepans in kitchens, they have all asked for a holiday, like the servants, and gone out for a day's pleasure."

At last he gave up the search in despair, and was walking slowly homewards, when his attention was attracted by a tapping at a parlour window. He looked up, and recognised, over the Venetian blind, the three faces of the young Masters Britton, who had once called him into the house to whistle to them.

"Who knows," thought Dick, "if I am invited in again, but I may make friends with the cook, and so get the lend of a saucepan?"

But the hope was fallacious. He was indeed asked in; but the moment he mentioned the object of his expedition, and confessed his design on the kitchen, the youngsters, one and all, declared that the thing was impossible. Their mamma was out, and the cook was such a termagant, and, that morning particularly, in so fierce a temper, that he might as well confront a fiery dragon. But what did he want with a saucepan?

"To bile our puddin in," said Dick. "It's Christmas time, you know; and we don't like to miss keepin it."

At the mention of Christmas and keeping it, the young Brittons withdrew into a corner, and held a whispered consultation, which seemed a long one, before they broke up, and clustered again round their *protégé*.

"Do you ever play at a round game?" inquired Master John.

"Sometimes," answered Dick. "Only I harn't got a hoop."

The young Brittons looked in some perplexity at each other.

"You know what counters are, don't you?" asked Master William.

"Yes," replied Dick; "they nail bad ha'pence to them."

The young Brittons were again disconcerted by this answer.

"He don't understand us," observed Master William.

"Give it him at once," said Master Benjamin.

Thus instructed, Master John advanced close up to Dick, and poked something into his hand, which the receiver thoroughly looked at, and then in turn at each of the young gentlemen.

"It's to play with," said Master John.

"You'll find it very amusing," said Master William.

"But you must whistle us a tune for it," said Master Benjamin.

Dick immediately complied, and struck up "Sich a gettin up Stairs," but rather dolefully: he would have preferred a good-sized, well-tinned saucepan to the thing in his hand, or all the toys in the world. However, a trifle is better than nothing; so, thrusting it into his pocket, he took leave of the young gentlemen, and returned home, whither we will follow him.

The Widow Peck has been described as a woman of sanguine disposition. We left her sitting with her elbows on the table, and her chin between her hands, with a dreamy steamy plum-pudding in all its glory before her—a vision not at all dispelled by the arrival of Greedy Charley with a real substantial lump of suet. He was closely followed by Dirty Polly, but, alas! without those conical paper bags associated with sugar and spice, and all that is nice, in grocery.

"What! no raisins—no currants—no sugar—no nothing!"

"Yes,—that!" said Dirty Polly, throwing her packet on the table; "and you're to make a good use of it."

The mother caught up the packet, and impatiently tearing off the envelope, in a faint voice proclaimed the contents.

"A square of yellow soap!"

"A square of yellow soap!" repeated both of the children.

"I should like to know of Heaven," said the widow, holding up the article towards the ceiling, "how I am to use *that* in a pudding!" But Heaven made no answer.

"It's for washing my face with!" cried Dirty Polly very indignantly. "I saw him stare at me!"

"Well, there can't be a plum-pudding without plums," said the widow, looking the very picture of despair. But her lamentations were cut short by the entrance of Little Jack: he had brought the flour, of course.

"No, mammy," said Jack, "I've got no flour at all; but there's grits."

"Grits!" exclaimed the widow. "Who wants grits?" But the case, when opened, appeared even worse. "Grits, indeed! It's a parcel of religious tracks!"

"It a'n't my fault," said little Jack, blubbing, and again having recourse to the old nightcap for want of a handkerchief. "It was Mrs. Stone's. She said it was for spiritous food, and I thought she meant gruel, with rum in it."

"Well, well," said the widow, forgetting, mother-like, her own troubles in the grief of her little one. "Don't cry. We shall, per-

haps, have a pudding yet—who knows? Susan, maybe, will have better luck."

As she spoke, Susan stepped into the room, and walking gravely up to the table, began to search under her frock.

"Why, in Mercy's name!" exclaimed the alarmed widow, "what is the girl fumbling at! You surely have not brought the eggs in your pocket?"

"I haven't brought the eggs in anything," said Susan, still groping among her petticoats.

"No! Then what *have* you brought?"

"A receipt for a plum-pudding."

"A receipt!" screamed the excited widow,— "a receipt! Why it's the only thing I don't want! I can write a receipt myself. Take a pound of suet, a pound of currants, a pound of plums—but how am I to take 'em? Where's my materials!"

"Here they are, mother," shouted the well-known voice of ragged Peter, as he bounded into the room and threw a good-looking bundle on the table. "There's the materials!"

"Then we're in luck after all!" said the widow nervously tugging at the knots of the old handkerchief, which suddenly gave way and allowed the materials to unfold themselves.

"O Lord! O cri! O crimony!" ejaculated Peter, and Charley, and little Jack, the girls using similar interjections of their own.

"Hold me!" cried the widow, "lay hold of me or I shall run away. I'm going off my head—I'm half crazy—take 'em out of my sight!—A pair of old red plushes!"

"I thought," whined Peter, "they was things from the pantry. But that comes of turning my back to the porter and exposing my rags. I wish, I do, that I was all front!"

"There's Dick," exclaimed Susan; "I hear his whistle in the distance. I wonder if he has got the saucepan!"

"Oh, of course we shall have that," said the widow with great bitterness: repeated disappointments had brought her to the mood for what she called arranging Providence.— "Yes, we shall have the saucepan, no doubt, just because we've nothing to put in it." She was wrong. In another minute Dick was standing amongst his brothers and sisters, but empty-handed.

"Why, bless the boy! He hasn't brought the saucepan after all!"

"No," said Dick,— "nor even a tin-pot. But I've brought this," and he chucked his present on the table.

"As I live!" cried the widow,— "it's an ivory totum!"

"Yes," said Dick. "It was given me by the young Brittons. They seemed to think as we had no pudding, we should like to divert our hungers."

"Divert a fool's head!" cried the poor widow, throwing herself back in her chair, and laughing hysterically. "The world's gone mad!—the world's gone mad, and every body is crazy! The more one wants anything, the more they give one something else.—and the more one don't want any thing, the more they force it upon you!"

Here am I, going to make a plum-pudding—or rather wanting to make one—and what have I got towards it!”

“A lump of suet!” muttered Charley.

“Yes, that’s something,” said the widow. “But what else—tell me what else have I got towards my pudding? Why a square of yellow soap—a bundle of tracks—a written receipt—a pair of red plushes,—and a tetotum!”

The circle of children, down-hearted as they were, could not forbear a titter at the idea of the comical pudding to be made of such ingredients; but their mirth was speedily damped by the tears of their mother.

“It’s all over,” she said, “and Christmas must go by without its pudding! What will come of it, Lord knows! Once break through a religious rule, and who knows the consequence? There was your poor father and me: every wedding-day in our lives, as sure as it came round, we made a point to have pickled streaky pork and pea-pudding, the same as at our nuptials; but one year somehow or another we missed—and in less than a week after he was called away.”

“And why, mammy,” asked little Jack, “why didn’t you die too, then?”

The widow, doubtless, would have answered this artless question; but unfortunately she was seized with such a violent fit of coughing as almost took away her breath. At last she recovered, rather suddenly, and assumed the attitude of a listener.

“Hush! there’s somebody tapping at the door.”

The children immediately rushed to the latch, and let in a tall thin man, in black clothes and green spectacles, with an umbrella in one hand, and a red book in the other. A glance at the breast of his coat confirmed the widow’s worst fears; an inkhorn with a pen in it was dangling from one of the button-holes.

“If it’s rates or taxes,” she said, “you must seize at once—for I haven’t a farthing.”

The man in black made no answer, but kept prying through his green glasses at the circle of young faces, and at length fixed upon Dick.

“Didn’t I see you, my lad, looking in at the window of a cook-shop?”

“Yes,” answered Dick, “and you asked me about the family, and if we wasn’t in distress.”

“Very good,” said the man in black. “And you replied that you were in very deep distress indeed.”

“Yes, for a sarcepan,” said Dick.

“It was to boil our Christmas pudding in,” said the widow. “But we haven’t got one, sir, nor no hopes of one.”

“Very good,” said the man in black. “I am a Perambulating Member of the District Benevolent Visitation Society, and am come to relieve your wants.”

“You are very good, I’m sure,” said the widow, quite flustered by such moral plunges from hot to cold, and then to hot again. “As

you say, sir, I have seen better days,"—though how or when the gentleman said so was known only to herself. "Yes, for twenty years I have been a householder, and up to this time have never missed celebrating my Christmas in a respectable way. And I do own it would go nigh to break my heart."

"Very good, very good," said the man in black, busily writing in the red book, from which he eventually tore out a leaf, that he folded up and presented to the widow.

"There's an order, ma'am, for what you want."

"The Lord in heaven bless you!" cried the widow, starting up from her chair, with a first impulse to throw herself on the good man's neck; and a second one, to go down on her knees to him; but which she checked just as the genuflection arrived at the proper point for a very profound curtsy.

"Oh, sir!—but I'm too full to speak. Yet, if the prayers of a widow and six fatherless children——"

"Very good, very good, very good," said the man in black, waving off the six ragged, dirty, grateful, fatherless children, who wanted to hug and kiss him—and shuffling as fast as he could to the door, through which he bolted more like a detected swindler than a professed Samaritan.

"Well, that comes of trusting to Providence," said the widow, quite forgetting a recent lapse, the least in the world, towards atheism. "Come, children, sing 'O be joyful,' for we have got our pudding at last."

The children needed no further hint; but at once joined hands, and began dancing round the table, as if the grand object of their hopes had been already smoking in the middle—Dick whistling "Merrily danced the Quaker's wife," as loud and fast as he could rattle it, whilst the mother ecstatically beat time with her head and foot. At last they were all out of breath.

"There, that will do," said the widow. "Now then, some of you put on your hats and bonnets to fetch the things; for, of course, it's an order on the baker and the grocer."

"It's an order," said Careful Susan, reading very deliberately the paper which she had taken from her mother's passive hand,— "an order for six yards of flannel."

"Flannin'!"

"Yes, flannel."

The widow snatched the paper; glanced at it; threw it from her; and dropped into her chair; not as if for a temporary rest, but as though she would fain have sunk through the bottom of it, and right through the floor, and down through the foundation of the house, and six foot of earth beneath, for a quiet grave.

In a moment she had six comforters at her neck; not woollen ones, but quite as warm and more affectionate, though their loving assiduities were repelled.

"Don't hang on me—don't! And don't tell me to hope, for I won't! I can't be consoled! So don't come nigh me—no, not even

if you see me fainting away — for I'm grown desperate, like an overdriven beast, and don't know what I may commit!"

The panic-stricken children instinctively backed into a distant semicircle, and fixing their eyes on their parent, as if she had really been the enraged animal she had described, awaited in awful silence her next words. At last they came in a fierce harsh voice.

"Wipe Jackey's nose."

A brother and sister on either hand of the little one immediately performed the desired office; and then trembling waited the next command.

"Tear up that devilish paper!"

Susan immediately picked up the unfortunate order, but as she hesitated, with her usual prudence, to destroy what was equivalent to six yards of flannel, Dirty Polly snatched the paper from her, and tore it up as small as she could mince it.

"I have hoped as long as I could," cried the widow, suddenly starting to her feet, "but now I give up! When bad luck sets in that way, blow upon blow, it's for good. We shall never prosper again — never, never, never! We're a ruined family, root and branch — and if it was not for the sin, I'd wish nothing better at this blessed moment than to have you all six tied round my waist, enjoying a Serpentine death!"

At this horrible picture, which the speaker dramatised by frantically throwing up her arms, as at the fatal plunge, and then letting herself sink gradually, by a sort of curtsey, as if subsiding into the mud, the poor devoted children set up a general howl; and then broke into a series of sobbings and ejaculations, only checked by the opening of the door and the entrance of another stranger.

If the former visitor resembled a tax-gatherer, his successor hardly made a more favourable impression on the widow, from whom, had he asked the same question as the Baronet in the Poor Gentleman, "Do I look like a bailiff?" he would probably have received the same answer — "I don't know but you do." He had no red book in his hand, and no inkhorn at his button-hole; but he carried a very formidable bludgeon, and wore a very odd wig, and a very broad-brimmed hat, as much on one side as a yacht in a squall. Altogether there was such an air of disguise about him, that if not a bailiff, he was certainly, as the next best guess, a policeman in plain clothes.

"I believe, ma'am," said the stranger, "you have just had a visit from an agent of a Benevolent Society?"

"Yes, and be hanged to him!" thought the widow; "and perhaps you're another!" but she held her tongue. The stranger, therefore, repeated his question to Susan, as the eldest of the children, and was answered in the affirmative.

"I knew it," said the stranger. "And he asked if you were not in distress; and you said that you were, and he told you he was come to relieve it."

"Yes, with six yards —" burst from several voices.

"Hush — hold your little tongues! I know it all — with an order

for six yards of flannel — wasn't it so? Six yards of flannel for a Christmas pudding — ha! ha! ha!

The children would have laughed, too, but they were afraid. The stranger had suddenly turned into a conjurer, who knew their thoughts and wishes.

"You are right, indeed, sir," said the widow. "He called himself by some hard name."

"Yes, an ambulating member," said the stranger, "of the District Visitation. I know them well. Six yards of flannel — just like them. That's their way. There was poor Biddy Hourigan, an Irish Catholic, ma'am — they visited her, too, and found her in deep distress, not about a pudding though, but because she had not a farthing in the world to get her husband out of purgatory. And how do you think, ma'am, they relieved a poor soul in purgatory? Why, with a bushel of coals!"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the widow; adding, in the simplicity of her heart, "that perhaps it was in the winter?"

"No, ma'am, there's no winter *there*," said the stranger. "But to business. You have seen better days."

The poor widow cast a piteous glance at the bare walls and rickety furniture of her humble dwelling.

"You have been a housekeeper many years in this parish," continued the stranger, "and have been accustomed all your days to a plum-pudding at Christmas; and you cannot bear to go without it — hush! not a word! — I know it all by sympathy. I like myself to keep up old customs — better, most of them, than the new ones."

"They are, indeed," said the widow, shaking her head. "But if it is not a liberty, may I ask, sir, if you belong to any Society yourself?"

"Why, yes, ma'am," said the stranger. "In one sense, I do — namely, the Universal Society of Human Nature. But if you mean such as the District Visitation, I do not. I tread in their steps, it is true, but it is to do what they leave undone. Their ambulators serve me for pointers to find my birds."

"And a noble sort of sporting, if ever there was one!" exclaimed the widow, with enthusiasm. "It's a thousand pities more rich people don't take out licences, and follow the same game."

"It is, indeed, a thousand pities, ma'am," said the stranger; "and a thousand shames to boot. In this motley world of ours, some people have their happiness cut thick, and buttered on both sides; and some have it thin, and no butter at all. As one of the former class, it's my duty to bestow some of my greasy superfluity on my poorer fellow-creatures. But what are all those heterogeneous articles on the table, neither eatables nor drinkables — have you been visited, ma'am, by half a dozen Societies?"

The widow, with the help of her family, related their adventures in search of a pudding, at the end of which the stranger laughed so long and immoderately, and choked, and got so black in the face, that the children shrieked in chorus for fear he should go to heaven before his time. But ready-made angel as he was, heaven spared him a

little longer by letting him come to ; at which, however, instead of seeming overjoyed, he looked very grave, and shook his head, till the widow feared he had "bust a vessel."

"Too bad," he said, at last, "too bad of me to laugh at such distress. I must make amends on the spot—and the best way will be to make you all, if I can, as merry as myself. There, ma'am"—and he placed in the widow's hand a purse, through the green meshes of which she perceived the glitter of sovereigns, like gold fish among weeds. "Properly laid out, that money will purchase all the requisites for a Christmas plum-pudding, and some odd comforts and clothing besides. Hush—no words, I guess them all by sympathy! Only a shake of the hand all round, and a kiss from the little one. There! Be good boys and girls! God bless you all! Good-by!"

The children watched the exit of the generous stranger till the last bit of him had disappeared, and then, as if "drowned in a dream," still continued gazing on the door.

"He was a real gentleman!" cried Dick.

"A saint! a saint!" exclaimed Mrs. Peck, "a real saint upon earth—and I took him for a bailiff! but no matter. He don't know it, that's one comfort; and if he did, such an angelical being would forgive it. But come, children, what are you all staring at? Why don't you huzza now, as you did afore, and whistle, and take hands, and dance round the table? Vent yourselves how you like—only don't quite pull the house down—for we've got a Christmas Pudding at last!"



A LOUNGE IN THE LANDES.

THE TOWN OF DAX. ITS ORIGIN. BOILING SPRINGS. DEZELOUZ, THE
BRIGAND OF THE LANDES.

THE traveller who, leaving Bordeaux, proceeds southwards in the direction of the Lower Pyrenees, cannot fail to be struck by the singular change that takes place in the appearance of the country, within a few miles of the above-named city. The vine-clad slopes and plains of the department of the Gironde are replaced by immense tracts of sand, the sole vegetation of which consists in large forests of pine trees. Not a blade of grass varies the wearisome monotony of this sandy desert; only, here and there, a few wild pinks rear their meagre stalks and pale rose-coloured flowers above the arid surface. Towns there are none; few villages, unless an occasional collection of hovels inhabited by basket-makers and wood-cutters may be deemed worthy of the name. The scanty inhabitants of the district stride about elevated on their tall stilts, and are compelled to make long and frequent journeys to procure themselves the barest necessities of life. It is only towards the southern and south-eastern limits of the extensive but thinly-populated department to which these Landes give their name, that the soil begins to change its nature, and produce something besides timber and turpentine; the country assimilating itself, in some degree, to the fertile and beautiful district of the Lower Pyrenees. One of the first towns that are met with on emerging from the plains of sand is that of Dax, which contains about six thousand inhabitants, and is remarkable for three things — the beauty of its women, its mineral springs, and the curious old legend connected with its origin.

The origin of Dax was as follows: — At some period of the Christian era, of which the exact date has unfortunately not been preserved, that very estimable saint, Vincent, had descended upon the earth, and was taking a stroll within a short distance of the place where Dax now stands, when he encountered a well-clad personage, of sinister aspect, whom he, with true saintly penetration, at once recognised as the great enemy of mankind — Sathanas, *in propria personâ*. The saint might probably have passed on, without deigning to notice so unseemly a companion, had not his attention been attracted by an object that the father of evil carried in his hand. This was a stone — no small pebble, nor even a paving stone, but a solid block of granite, full three feet in length, and of breadth and thickness proportionate. The saint asked him of the horns and tail whither he was betaking himself.

"Yonder," was the reply of Satan, who pointed with his crooked

forefinger across some half dozen fields to a pleasant nook upon the banks of the river Adour.

"And what are you going to do with that stone?"

"To build a town," answered the demon; "a town that shall be mine, dwelt in by my friends, and ruled by my ordinances."

"All that will be," replied the saint, "*s'il plait à Dieu*—if God pleases."

At the word Satan dropped the stone, and fled howling from the spot. The mass of rock still lies where he left it, split in the middle by the fall, and goes by the name of the *Pierre du Diable*, or in patois, of the *Perrelounque*, or long stone.

St. Vincent, it appears, was not too proud to take a hint, however objectionable the source whence it proceeded; and, on viewing the spot that had been pointed out to him, he was obliged to confess that his Satanic majesty was not wanting in judgment, and that few sites could be better chosen for the erection of a town than that sunny piece of land upon the banks of the Adour. At his suggestion, therefore, a town was built; and it was doubtless only the founder's modesty that prevented its receiving his name instead of the monosyllable of small grace and obscure etymology by which it is actually distinguished. The saint contented himself with the principal street, which is still called after him; while St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Francis, and other equally celebrated persons, were induced to stand sponsors to the remaining streets and lanes composing the town of Dax. A town that was under such saintly patronage could scarcely fail to become a favourite resort of the pious: moreover, the climate was mild and agreeable, the neighbouring country fruitful and fair to look upon, and accordingly monks, nuns, and friars, "white spirits and black, blue spirits and grey," of every order and degree, flocked thither; and at the present day there is scarcely a house of any size or antiquity in Dax that was not originally occupied by a religious community.

It was doubtless owing to the prayers and pious exercises of all these brotherhoods and sisterhoods that Dax increased in wealth and importance, and in the comeliness of its inhabitants, and that it is now a flourishing town, noted as possessing the handsomest race of women in the whole province. What the Arlesiennes, who claim a direct descent from the Juno-like matrons of ancient Rome, are in Provence, the Dacoises are in Bearn and Gascony, tall, well-made, graceful creatures, with Italian symmetry of feature, and the large dark eyes of Spain. Their personal beauty, however, is in some measure counterbalanced by a sad defect; they are most unconscionably stupid, and the unflattering proverb* that was originally made for the inhabitants of Champagne is not uncommonly applied to the women of Dax, and of the neighbouring district of the *Marençin*.

The natural phenomena to be observed at Dax are in the highest degree curious, consisting of boiling springs, strongly impregnated with sulphur and other minerals, and of fountains of hot mud, some of which

* *Quatre-vingt dix-neuf moutons et un Champenois font cent bêtes.*

rise in the very centre of the river and are dangerous to bathers, who are warned by notices posted on the banks. More than once it has happened that strangers swimming in the Adour found themselves suddenly scalded and half suffocated by the boiling mud that rose around them, and from which they did not escape without considerable difficulty and suffering. Baths of this mud prove highly beneficial in various diseases. The springs of boiling water are in the centre of the town, in the Place Pouyan; upon entering which one is surprised to find it filled with a steam, such as might proceed from fifty washerwomen's coppers. This steam arises from a pool some sixty yards square, which is kept full during the whole of the day by the hot sulphurous springs that bubble up, the superfluous water being let off by pipes. When evening comes, the flow grows gradually weaker, until, at midnight, the basin is nearly empty. At three in the morning it begins to fill again, and at six is full; and so it continues the year round, without its having been as yet possible to discover the cause of this singular phenomenon. The water is of boiling heat, excellent for washing linen, but useless for all culinary purposes. It scalds the fingers that are dipped in it, but will not cook meat or vegetables, or even harden an egg.

Until the beginning of the present century this large basin was uninclosed, save by the houses that surround it, some of which are so close to the water as to leave no room for a path in front of them. About that period, however, several suicides were committed by persons throwing themselves into the boiling pool; and at last one beautiful girl of eighteen, under the influence of some violent sorrow, precipitated herself into the water at noon-day from the upper story of an adjacent house. It was impossible to save her, and it was only at night, when the springs receded, that her body was found, reduced almost to shreds by the action of the boiling element. The horror caused by this incident was so great, that watchers were immediately stationed round the pool, to guard, as far as possible, against the recurrence of such a catastrophe; and as soon as permission could be obtained from the proper quarter, a strong iron railing, exceeding in height the neighbouring houses, was erected, and still remains around the spring. Several lions' heads protrude themselves through this palisade, and supply the town's people with the water.

The wild country and extensive pine forests of the Landes have afforded shelter even within the last twenty years to bands of robbers and outlaws, living by depredations committed on the highway, and occasionally emerging from their barren retreats into more fertile districts, to plunder the dwelling of a farmer or country gentleman. The improved state of French roads, the increase of traffic and travelling, and the greater vigilance of the gendarmerie, have of late rendered these offences of rare occurrence; and the last band that made itself any thing like a reputation in the department was that of a certain Dezelouz, whose career was brought to an abrupt termination in the autumn of the year 1829. He was the son of respectable parents at Dax, and at the usual age was taken as a soldier by the conscription, but had not been more than two years with his

regiment when he was tried by a court-martial for striking a sergeant, and condemned to death. His sentence was commuted to ten years hard labour, with a bullet chained to his ankle. At the expiration of that time he was released, but he was of a violent and reckless character, and soon relapsed into crime. He was found poaching on the grounds of Baron d'Estival, a country gentleman residing near Dax, and only escaped being taken by shooting one of the keepers. This keeper was a foster-brother of the Baron's, and the latter caused the most active researches to be made after the murderer; but Dezelouz, who knew the fate that awaited him if taken, fled into the Landes, got together a few bad characters, escaped convicts and others, and, by his activity and knowledge of the country, managed to elude pursuit for nearly two years, during which time several murders and innumerable robberies were laid to his charge. In addition to the difficulty of tracing him in a wild and thinly-peopled country, the long impunity enjoyed by Dezelouz was attributable to his treatment of the peasantry. He had sufficient judgment to abstain from molesting them, and was even known on more than one occasion to give alms and assistance to the poorer amongst them. They had consequently small inducement to betray him, or to contribute in any way to his apprehension.

On a summer night of the year 1829, five or six persons were assembled round a table in the Café Herbet, upon what was formerly the rampart, but is now the favourite public walk at Dax. The day had been sultry, and at sunset the Dacois had flocked to the promenade to enjoy the cool evening breeze, and listen to the band of a marching regiment that had halted for the night in the town. The music had ceased, and the promenade was in great measure deserted in favour of the various cafés, inside and in front of which numerous groups were seated refreshing themselves, and inhaling the perfumes that the night wind brought over from the fields and gardens surrounding the town. A few officers were still strolling up and down, their epaulets glancing as they passed beneath the lamps that were sparingly distributed over the rampart, while here and there, under the rows of plane trees, groups of peasants and artisans were collected, reposing from the fatigues of the day, or singing some of the popular verses of Jasmin, the barber-poet of Gascony.*

* The town of Agen, situated between Bordeaux and Toulouse, in what was formerly the province of Gascony, reckons among its inhabitants a poet greatly esteemed in France, although, owing to the language in which he writes, he is not likely to become much known out of that country. He is a barber, of the name of Jasmin, who, while diligently plying comb and razor, has found leisure to cultivate the muse, and produce a number of poems in Gascon French that are remarkable for their beauty and feeling. He has been frequently urged to abandon his trade, and take up his residence in Paris, but he prefers his present humble mode of life, under the sunny sky of his native province, to the struggles and perhaps heart-burnings he would have to encounter in the capital. His verses to Monsieur Dumont, of the French Academy, whose fellow-townsmen he is, in reply to an invitation of this nature, might rank with some of Burns's for their arch simplicity of style. About three years ago he paid a visit to Paris, where he was fêted on all hands, and had interviews with the king and royal family, who made him some

The party assembled in the Café Herbet consisted of three or four Dax merchants, of Baron d'Estival, and another country gentleman of the vicinity. Their conversation ran upon a robbery recently committed by the notorious Dezelouz ; and D'Estival expressed himself in terms of strong indignation concerning the inefficiency of a police that could not succeed in putting a stop to the crimes of that bandit and his companions.

"Is it possible," he exclaimed, "that in a country where armies of gendarmes and police agents are maintained at the public expense, a villain like this Dezelouz should be allowed to prey upon the community, to break into our houses, and render our highways unsafe? But I forget, the police is far more occupied in prying into the affairs of peaceable citizens, than in capturing criminals or preserving the public security."

Monsieur d'Estival had served in his youth under Napoleon, and had the reputation of not being particularly well affected to the existing order of things. No one present thought it advisable to reply to his observation, or to say any thing that might be construed into acquiescence in his opinions. There was a short pause, which D'Estival was the first to break.

"I have already," said he, "proposed to some of my neighbours to join with me in hunting down this bandit, but they appear little disposed to fag their horses, and expose themselves in an enterprise of the sort. It would be an excellent lesson for the police if a handful of volunteers were to succeed in what all the gendarmes of the department have been unable to effect. I am not rich, but I would willingly give a hundred Louis to the man who would put me in the way of capturing Dezelouz. Nay, I would give that sum merely to be placed for one instant face to face with the murderer of my poor foster-brother."

"The reward is a large one, Monsieur d'Estival, and might tempt many," said a man sitting at a table near that occupied by the Baron and his party, and who had overheard their conversation.

"It should nevertheless be paid," said D'Estival, "without a denier's abatement, to him who would bring me within pistol shot of the ruffian."

The person to whom the Baron addressed this assurance was a man of about thirty-five years of age, who, to judge from his garb, might be a farmer or one of the richer class of peasants. There was

handsome presents. An attempt was made by his friends to procure him the decoration of the Legion of Honour, but it was unsuccessful, his occupation, as it was reported at the time, being deemed an obstacle. In these days, however, when the *Etoile des Braves* is so lavishly bestowed, and nearly every fourth Frenchman, with a decent coat on his back, sports a red riband in its button-hole, it would scarcely be unreasonable to suppose, that amongst the multitude of decorated, there are some barbers — or worse. Instead of the cross, Jasmin received a pension of a thousand francs a year. During his stay in Paris he was the lion of soirées and public dinners, the courted and sought after of literary societies. But all this homage was insufficient to turn his head; and after two or three weeks, *low coiffur* Jasmin returned contentedly to his soap-box.

nothing, however, of peasant-like heaviness in his features, which were thin and sharp, his eyes were quick and shifting in their expression, while his compressed lips, and the lines around his mouth, indicated a firm and resolute character. He wore a small black moustache that contrasted with the colour of his hair, which was of a reddish hue, and in conformity with the custom of the peasants of the province was allowed to hang in long tangled locks over the collar of his jacket. A broad-leaved felt hat covered his head.

"A hundred Louis d'or!" said the man musingly: "it would be worth trying for."

"It should be punctually paid," said the Baron, gazing with some curiosity at his interlocutor, who, while speaking, had risen from his seat and changed his position so as to bring himself between D'Estival and the open door of the café—"punctually and exactly paid."

"I will claim it within the month," said the man, raising his hand to his head and by a sudden jerk removing at once the hat and tawny wig that he wore. Baron d'Estival, Jerome Dezelouz wishes you a good evening."

The next instant the daring bandit had sprung out of the café, across the rampart, and thrown himself off the latter, a height of some twelve or fifteen feet, into the field below. Almost before the Baron and his companions had sufficiently recovered from their astonishment to give the alarm, he was seen to plunge into the wood called the Braou, which extends close up to that side of Dax, and stretches away for a considerable distance along the banks of the river. Had there been a whole regiment formed up and in readiness to commence an immediate pursuit, his escape would still have been almost certain, favoured as he was by the darkness and by his knowledge of the intricacies of the forest and adjacent country.

The following day nothing was talked of at Dax but this new feat of Dezelouz. Many persons were of opinion that in conformity with his promise he would pay Monsieur d'Estival a visit before the month was out, and claim the reward which he had gained according to the letter, although not according to the spirit of the Baron's words; and as he was not likely to make such a visit unaccompanied by the means of enforcing his demand, the Baron was advised by his friends to apply to the authorities and have two or three gendarmes quartered in his house, or at any rate to augment the number of his servants, look to his arms, and be upon his guard. D'Estival did not think it necessary to comply with all these recommendations. His house was one of those old-fashioned châteaux of which a few still exist in France, and of sufficient strength, as he thought, to stand any siege that Dezelouz and his band could lay to it. It was a stone building forming three sides of a square, the fourth side being closed by a lofty iron paling of great strength and with chevaux-de-frise of formidable aspect at the top. This paling had been substituted by the Baron's father for a massive wall that formerly stood there, but which had been dilapidated during the struggles of the Revolution. Although less efficient as a defence than the stone parapet it replaced, it was in other respects a great improvement, inasmuch as it did not preclude

the view from the lower windows of the château of the beautifully-wooded park that surrounded the mansion. On the outer side of the building there were no windows upon the ground-floor, and those of the first story, which were at an elevation of nearly twenty feet from the ground, were guarded by strong iron bars that gave the house, when viewed from behind, rather a prison-like appearance.

Confident, then, in the defences of his dwelling, Monsieur d'Estival took few unusual precautions. He was a widower, and his establishment consisted of himself and his two children, boys of nine and ten years of age, a couple of female servants and two men, one of whom was his valet de chambre, while the other looked after the Baron's horse, worked in the garden, and went on messages into the town. The garde chasse, who inhabited a cottage situated at the further extremity of the park, was desired to keep a good look out, and inform his master immediately should he perceive any suspicious-looking persons prowling near the house or grounds. In addition to this precaution, the Baron looked to his fire-arms, saw that they were in serviceable order, and directed his servants to be particular in making fast the house-door and the gate of the court every evening before dusk. These measures taken, he considered he had done all that was needful for his security and that of his household.

Nearly a month had elapsed since the daring apparition of Dezelouz at the Café Herbet. The circumstance had ceased to be matter of conversation, and even those who had most warned the Baron to expect an attack were beginning to think he would remain unmolested, when one evening Monsieur d'Estival had occasion to send Cadet, his groom, into Dax to fetch some letters. The man was detained longer than he had expected to be, and eleven o'clock was chiming out from the church clocks as he left the town to return home. The night was dark, and with the exploits of Dezelouz fresh in his memory, the groom walked hastily along, cursing the chance that had kept him out so late, and sincerely wishing himself in his own stable rather than in the solitary lanes which he had to pass through before reaching it. He was within a quarter of a mile of the château when, on passing a thicket that bordered the road, he was suddenly seized from behind, and before he had time to utter a cry, he was stretched upon the ground with a violence that almost drove the breath out of his body. The next instant a man's knee was upon his breast and a hard hand clutched his throat.

"You are Monsieur d'Estival's servant?" said his assailant, in a low stern voice.

The poor fellow uttered an affirmative as well as the compressed state of his windpipe would allow him.

"You are going home?" continued the man, relaxing his grasp a little.

"I am so, with a message."

"Silence! Listen to me, and obey my orders. You have with you a key of the court gate—that I know. Upon entering you will leave the gate open. After delivering your message, watch your opportunity to unfasten the house door, so that it can be opened from

without. Do you know me?" continued the man, after a moment's pause, during which he seemed to be considering whether he had other directions to give.

"No," replied the terrified servant.

"Dezelouz!" said the bandit, in a tone that, in conjunction with that dreaded name, caused the groom to tremble under the knee of his oppressor.

"Swear by the blessed Virgin," resumed Dezelouz, "to do my bidding, and observe your oath truly, or *per lou gran nom de Diou*," added he, in the energetic patois of the province, "before the week is out you are a dead man."

The unlucky groom took the oath required of him: the bandit removed his knee from his breast, and assisted him to rise.

"Let the service required of you be well performed," said Dezelouz, "and you may depend on a large reward. Fail in it, and, wherever you hide, my vengeance shall reach you."

The next instant he had disappeared amongst the trees.

In grievous trepidation did the unfortunate Cadet accomplish the remainder of his walk. He was a simple sort of peasant, and Dezelouz had enlisted in his service the two strongest feelings of his nature, fear and superstition. He had sworn by the Virgin, and his life was forfeited if he failed. Nevertheless, the remembrance of much kindness received from his master made him unwilling to accomplish the treachery required of him; and it would be hard to say how his indecision might have terminated had he not, when within the park, cast a glance behind him and distinguished, as he thought, by the faint light of the stars, a figure dogging his steps. This was too much for the nerves of Cadet, causing him, as it did, to foresee the possibility of punishment immediately following the non-execution of the orders he had received. After passing through the gate, therefore, he allowed it to swing heavily to, but did not lock it. The heavy oaken door of the house was opened to him by the valet, who again carefully locked and barred it.

Cadet, although not particularly brave, and a good deal embarrassed by the oath he had taken, was not without a share of Gascon astuteness; and it occurred to him, as he mounted the stairs, that although he had sworn to leave the doors open, he had not sworn to keep his master in ignorance of his so doing. Upon finding himself in presence of the Baron, he related to him, as laconically as his terror and confusion would allow, the adventure he had had upon the road, and the promise extorted from him by Dezelouz.

"Have you obeyed his orders?" inquired Monsieur d'Estival, when his servant had done speaking. "Have you left the doors open?"

"The gate is open," replied Cadet; "the house-door I was to watch an opportunity of opening."

"You shall do so," said the Baron, coolly; "but first desire Dubois to put lights in the picture gallery, and send the women here. Fetch me a coil of rope that you will find with the fishing nets. And quick, there is no time to lose."

Cadet left the room, up and down which the Baron paced two or

three times, apparently musing on what he had to do. The most natural course to adopt, under such circumstances, would have been to have kept the doors firmly barricaded, and trust to their strength as a defence against the robbers, while a few shots fired from the windows might have assisted to repel them, or, at any rate, would have alarmed the neighbourhood and brought assistance. But Monsieur d'Estival was a man of great courage and coolness; and not content with merely protecting his dwelling from the expected attack, he had formed a plan by which he thought it probable he might bring about the capture or extermination of Dezelouz and his band. Hurrying to the chamber in which his two children were sleeping, he awoke them, and bid them dress immediately. The astonished children obeyed, and accompanied their father to his sitting-room, in which the servants were by this time assembled. The Baron desired them to follow him, and, taking up a candle, led the way to the room that went by the name of the picture gallery.

This was an apartment upon the second floor, that had long been used solely for the purpose which its name indicated, but of late years had been converted into a sort of state chamber, reserved for any guests of unusual importance who might honour the château with their presence. A few pictures, the size of life, representing hooped and farthingaled dames, mailed knights, and ermined magistrates of the house of D'Estival, still decorated the walls; and a spacious bed of Spanish mahogany, with old-fashioned brocade hangings, stood upon one side of the apartment, the windows of which looked out to the back of the château. A pair of deer's antlers, the tusks of a wild boar of unusual size, and some other trophies of the chase, were suspended above the lofty mantel-piece, and in a corner was placed a carved and inlaid cabinet, in which the Baron was accustomed to keep his fowling pieces, powder-horns, and other shooting apparatus.

When Monsieur d'Estival had collected his children and domestics in this apartment, he turned to his groom and ordered him to go down stairs and open the door of the house. Cadet stared, but obeyed the command in silence. While he was gone the Baron closed the room door and drew a bolt, but upon hearing Cadet re-ascending the stairs alone, he re-opened it and admitted him. He then locked and barred the door, which was of considerable thickness, with strong hinges and numerous fastenings on the inner side, and drew two or three heavy pieces of furniture against it as an additional security for its not being forced open. This done, he carefully masked the lights, opened one of the windows, and looked out. All was quiet without, nothing appeared to be stirring amongst the trees and bushes that grew close up to the walls of the château; but the night was dark, and it was impossible to see to any distance.

"Cadet," said the Baron, who was occupied making a noose at one end of a long rope.

The groom approached his master, who spoke a few words to him in a low tone, and then hung the cord out of the window. Cadet got upon the window-sill, and passing his legs through the noose, seated himself upon it, grasping the rope above his head with both hands,

while Monsieur d'Estival and his valet Dubois, an old soldier, who had been long in his service, lowered away gradually till the cessation of the strain warned them that the groom had reached the ground. The rope was then drawn in, the window closed, the lights were unmasked for a minute or two, and then finally extinguished, and all was silence and darkness in the apartment.

In less than a quarter of an hour after the completion of these arrangements, various sounds became audible, proceeding from the lower floor of the château. Doors were slammed, heavy footsteps were heard upon the stairs and in the corridors, and at times a crashing noise announced that Dezelouz and his band were at work, breaking open drawers and furniture in search of booty. Owing, however, to the size of the house, and its irregular internal arrangement, it was some time before any of the intruders discovered the room in which Monsieur d'Estival had barricaded himself. At last a party, that was roaming through the passages and corridors in search of the inmates, whom they were surprised not to meet with, tried the door of the picture gallery, which resisted their efforts to open it. With horrible curses and imprecations they summoned the Baron to admit them; but no answer was returned to their menaces. They threw themselves violently against the door, and struck furious blows upon it with the butts of their guns, but all was in vain, until it occurred to some of their number to fetch a heavy marble statue from its pedestal in another room, and use it as a battering ram. Poised upon the muscular arms of half-a-dozen men, the mass of stone was brought in violent contact with the door, causing the oaken panels to crack, and the fastenings to yield. After a few blows the barrier gave way entirely, and eight or ten men, headed by Dezelouz in person, rushed into the room. Not a living creature was there. The apartment was entirely unoccupied.

Unable to account for the disappearance of the Baron and his family, whom they had made sure of finding in this room, the brigands instituted a minute search for the fugitives. It appeared impossible that the latter should have left the apartment. The windows were shut and fastened, and there was no other mode of egress than the door, which had just been broken open. The bed, and every article of furniture that could by possibility afford concealment, were being closely examined, when, in the midst of their investigation, the robbers were startled by a shot fired in front of the house. They paused and listened. Another, and a third report from the sentries at the gate, and then the clatter of horses' feet were heard, as a strong detachment of gendarmes galloped into the court of the château. At the same moment the house-door was hastily shut and barred by one of the robbers who was guarding it.

The first impulse of Dezelouz and his followers, upon finding themselves thus surprized, was to rush to the back windows of the château. But even had they been disposed to risk a leap of five and twenty feet, they would have fallen upon the sabres of a piquet of gendarmes that was patrolling in rear of the house. They were fairly caught in a trap; and gaining courage from the desperate position in which they

found themselves, they resolved to make an effort to cut their way through their enemies. Headed by Dezelouz and his lieutenant, a swarthy and gigantic Pyrenean, who went by the name of Lou Negre, or the black, they charged out of the château and made a furious attack upon the gendarmes.

Scarcely had the last of the banditti vacated the picture gallery, when one of the large family portraits swung aside and disclosed the entrance of a small room, or rather closet, that had probably served, in times of civil war and revolution, for the concealment of persons and property. Monsieur d'Estival and his valet stepped out, each with a gun in his hand, and after restoring the picture to its former position, descended cautiously to the lower part of the château. A desperate fight was going on in the court-yard, of which the side nearest the house was occupied by Dezelouz and his band. It was impossible for the Baron and his servant to join their rescuers, but they stationed themselves at a window and opened fire upon the robbers. The latter, finding themselves thus assailed in front and rear, fought with less confidence; moreover, the discipline and skill in arms of the soldiers began to prevail over the desperation and superior numbers of the brigands. Many of the latter were shot and cut down, others made prisoners, and at last only Dezelouz, Lou Negre, and three others remained, standing back to back upon the door steps, and defending themselves with unabated courage. Half-a-dozen gendarmes pressed forward to seize them; but the robbers fought with such fury that, although one of them fell, their assailants were for a moment repulsed. Before another attack could be made, Dezelouz spoke a word or two to his companions, and the four brigands darted through the door of the château and secured it behind them.

The comparative stillness that now reigned without the house enabled the gendarmes to hear the noise and scuffle of the violent struggle that had commenced within it. Only one shot was fired, but there was a trampling of feet, a clashing of steel, and the sound of heavy blows. When the soldiers succeeded in forcing an entrance, nearly the first objects they encountered were the dead bodies of Monsieur d'Estival, his servant, and two of the robbers, lying bathed in their blood at the foot of the staircase. Dezelouz and his lieutenant had thrown away their arms, and were seated upon a stair with the calmness of desperate men who knew that they had forfeited all hope of mercy, and lost every chance of escape. They offered their wrists to the handcuffs, and were led prisoners into the town.

The last capital punishment that took place at Dax was that of Dezelouz and Lou Negre, who were executed on the Place Sainte Marguerite upon St. Vincent's day, the 1st of September, 1829. The guillotine was shortly afterwards removed to Mont de Marsan, the chief town of the department of the Landes.

THE LARK AND THE ROOK.

A FABLE.

"Lo! hear the gentle lark!"
SHAKESPEARE.

ONCE on a time—no matter where—
A Lark took such a fancy to the air,
That though he often gaz'd beneath,
Watching the breezy down, or heath,
Yet very, very seldom he was found
To perch upon the ground.

Hour after hour,
Through ev'ry change of weather hard or soft,
Through sun and shade, and wind and show'r,
Still fluttering aloft ;
In silence now, and now in song,
Up, up in cloudland all day long,
On weary wing, yet with unceasing flight,
Like to those Birds of Paradise, so rare,
Fabled to live, and love, and feed in air,
But never to alight.

It caus'd, of course, much speculation
Among the feather'd generation ;
Who tried to guess the riddle that was in it—
The robin puzzled at it, and the wren,
The swallows, cock and hen,
The wagtail, and the linnet,
The yellowhammer, and the finch as well—
The sparrow ask'd the tit, who couldn't tell,
The jay, the pie—but all were in the dark,
Till out of patience with the common doubt,
The Rook at last resolv'd to worm it out,
And thus accosted the mysterious Lark :—

"Friend, prithee, tell me why
You keep this constant hovering so high,
As if you had some castle in the air,
That you are always poisoning there,
A speck against the sky—

Neglectful of each old familiar feature
Of Earth that nurs'd you in your callow state—
You think you're only soaring at heaven's gate,
Whereas you're flying in the face of Nature!"

"Friend," said the Lark, with melancholy tone,
And in each little eye a dewdrop shone,
"No creature of my kind was ever fonder
Of that dear spot of earth
Which gave it birth—
And I was nestled in the furrow yonder!
Sweet is the twinkle of the dewy heath,
And sweet that thymy down I watch beneath,
Saluted often with a loving sonnet;
But Men, vile Men, have spread so thick a scurf
Of dirt and infamy about the Turf,
I do not like to settle on it!"

MORAL.

Alas! how Nobles of another race
Appointed to the bright and lofty way,
Too willingly descend to haunt a place
Polluted by the deeds of Birds of Prey!



RANK AND FILE.

THE OLD SOLDIER'S TALE.

TOWARDS the latter end of last autumn, I was on my way to visit a friend, who having recently purchased an estate in Wurtemberg, had offered me a few days' shooting over his well-stocked preserves.

I threw a hasty glance at my fellow-travellers, as I took my place in the *eil-wagen* that runs between Heidelberg and Stutgard. They seemed to be chiefly bagmen returning from the fair at Frankfort, and taking it for granted that their conversation would not be very amusing to me, I struck a light and consoled myself with a cigar. "*Permettez*," said my opposite neighbour, stretching out his hand for the burning tinder. I gave it, making at the same time, some trifling observation in French.

"*Comment, monsieur parle Français?*" he exclaimed, hastily closing a book he had been reading; then without waiting for an answer he continued, "I see you are no German—an Englishman, I suppose? travelling for pleasure of course?—have you been long in this country?"

As soon as he had talked himself out of breath, I informed him that I was on my way to visit a friend whose château was near Stutgard.

"*Vraiment!*" was the reply. "To Count Grafenberg's, no doubt? I am going there too—what a fortunate *rencontre*. I know Grafenberg very well. Perhaps you have heard him mention me? my name is Grécour." He held out a card on which was a viscount's coronet engraved in gold, and the name of "Grécour de St. Ouen" underneath. Making my bow to the coronet, I expressed my pleasure that we were to be companions; a compliment he returned with an ease and fluency that quite put my plain English civility to the blush. He then went on talking so much about himself, his family, fortune, and prospects, that when he wound up with the information that he was intended for a diplomatist, I could not help thinking that discretion, a very necessary quality for that character, was entirely wanting.

After some hours' travelling, we stopped to dine. On entering the *wirthshaus* we found a guest already seated at the table, who was staying the impatience of his stomach with large lumps of bread. He was a fine-looking man, about forty years of age, with well-formed features, small eyes of a greyish blue, and a pair of the most formidable mustachios I ever saw: they were sandy-coloured, very thick, and being twisted into two straight lines, stood out at least three inches on each side of his mouth. He was the object of unceasing attention to our host, who served him first at table, and addressing him as "*Herr Baron*," asked him many questions; among others,

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looked very much like a washing basket on wheels; a wooden seat slung on leathers was occupied by the Baron and his servant, so we took our places behind on a sack well filled with straw. Thus we set off, drawn by a cart horse with a sweeping mane and tail. After an hour's jolting along a cross road, we arrived at the foot of a steep hill, and I seized the opportunity of getting out to walk to the village, close to which the château was situated. If a picturesque situation could give beauty, this little hamlet would be one of the prettiest spots in the world. It lay half-way up a steep ascent: behind it hills swelled into mountains covered with pine forests, the last ridge of which looked like a dark fringe against the clear blue sky; but instead of neat cottages, a German village is generally composed of diminutive stone houses—blank, uninteresting, and without the smallest pretensions to taste. As this one did not differ in any respect from others I had seen, I was hurrying through it, when my attention was attracted by a chapel that stood on a piece of ground skirting the village. There was nothing remarkable in the architecture; but its blackened walls, half overgrown with ivy, bespoke it of great antiquity, and I turned out of my way to inspect it more closely.

A number of children were playing near it, and as I approached, an old man made his way out from amongst them, and accosted me. Although probably sixty years of age, his firm step and upright carriage marked the old soldier, and his large blue eyes had an expression of mildness, that prepossessed me strongly in his favour. I found he had the care of the chapel, and willingly accepted his offer of showing it. It had been erected, he told me, by one of the Engelstein family, who bound himself to dedicate a chapel to his patron St. Wolfgang, provided, as I understood the story, the saint would help him out of some dilemma into which his own misconduct had brought him. In the centre of a painted window of extraordinary depth and brilliancy of colouring, the donor was represented on his knees in the act of making his vow, and St. Wolfgang above, listening with great attention to the conditions offered him. The side compartments were filled with likenesses of several of the counts of Engelstein, in dresses of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The walls were completely covered with shields bearing the arms of various members of the same noble family, with the dates of their deaths. One of these particularly excited my curiosity: it bore the date 1660, and was hung upside down. My cicerone informed me that this reversed coat of arms belonged to the last of the Engelsteins, and denoted that the family had at that time become extinct. He was proceeding to relate some traditional anecdotes of the original owners of the property, now in possession of Count Grafenberg, when the children, becoming impatient at the absence of their friend, broke in upon us and began romping in the chapel. While he endeavoured to restore order, I recollected that my absence would appear strange to those who were expecting me; and promising to visit him again, I took, by his advice, a short cut through the forest, and arrived at the château just as the carriage with Grécour and the Baron came jolting into sight.

From the relics I had just seen of the lords of Engelstein, I had expected to find Grafenberg's abode a castellated building with towers and turrets. It turned out a modern dwelling; a century and a half old, it is true, but still a mere infant compared to the older castle, the ruins of which frowned from a crag above. It was in fact a hunting seat; a long low building flanked at the four corners with small round towers. A ponderous oak door, surmounted with the arms of the last owners carved in stone, and above them a stag's head with enormous antlers, admitted us to a spacious hall hung with rifles, hunting horns, and other accessories of the chase. The walls presented the appearance of a forest of horns: they were covered with antlers of all dimensions, from the spreading branches of the stately *sechszehner* to the horns of the more unpretending roebuck. These were fixed to small shields, on which were recorded the weight of the deer, date of his death, and the name of the fortunate marksman. Some of them were more than a hundred and fifty years old; and I observed several under which the difficulty of the chase, or the extraordinary size of the animal, was recorded in verse.

We were received with open arms by Grafenberg, who presented me to his wife and sister. The latter was a pretty lively brunette, and I fancied the viscomte seemed a little disappointed at her reception of him; for though she held out her hand with great frankness, the welcome she gave our fellow-traveller was at least as friendly. He was now introduced to us as the Baron von Seldeneck. He had been intimate in the family for several years, and I observed that every individual of it, men, women, children, down to the very dogs, seemed to hail his arrival with pleasure. Grafenberg informed me, with great glee, that he had arranged several hunting parties, which were to take place during our stay, and on the morrow we were to commence with a badger hunt.

A substantial supper was served in the hall, and our party was increased by several of the neighbouring gentlemen, who were invited to do honour to our arrival. A carouse followed, that seemed to make it doubtful whether we should all be in a condition to rise next morning at the early hour fixed for our excursion. Our healths were drank in Hockheimer, Liebfrawmilch, Johannisberg, &c. &c., and when pretty well half seas over, the whole party broke into a stormy chorus in praise of hunting.

Either the last night's excess, or the force of habit, made me rise later than I intended next morning, and on descending, I found the breakfast room deserted. Grafenberg was gone to the place of rendezvous, leaving a message for me to follow. Snatching a hasty meal I prepared to set off, when Grécour entered the room. I found he was in the same case as myself, and glancing at his dress, easily divined the reason. To say nothing of his having tightened his waist into the likeness of that of a wasp, he wore a black velvet jockey cap, which contrasted ludicrously enough with his closely cropped hair, in the last Parisian fashion, and his ample beard *à la Henri quatrième*. A broad gold band was slung over his shoulder, to which hung a *couteau de chasse*; and his tightly-strapped overalls

and thin boots were certainly fit for any thing rather than a badger hunt.

We had not gone far, when to my surprise I saw the fair Albertine emerge from the shrubbery, a scarf drawn round her, and her uncovered hair braided with the neatness and good taste so peculiar to the German ladies. She was tripping lightly along as we crossed her path, and her cheek became crimson as she looked from me to Grécour. After a few words from the latter expressive of his confusion at being caught in a shooting dress, which did not draw forth the compliment he was fishing for, we parted.

"She is a charming girl," said he, "and I would at once make up my mind to marry her if I could be satisfied on one or two points."

"Doubts of a preference for yourself are not among them, I suppose?" returned I. "By the by, I beg that another time you will not place me in the very awkward situation of being *un de trop*."

"*Je vous donne ma parole*," replied he earnestly. "I did not ask for the rendezvous *la petite* has just given me——"

He was interrupted by the appearance of the Baron.

"This man is my abhorrence," he muttered, as the latter joined us. "If he observed her little manœuvre to meet me, he will tell her brother of it."

We arrived at the spot where the badger was supposed to be just as the *Dachs hund* was put on the scent. For the information of those of my readers who have never seen a *Dachs hund*, I must describe a species of dog that certainly is the ugliest of the canine creation. A body at least two feet long is supported on bandy legs not more than three inches high; the feet turn out like those of a lizard, while the head strongly resembles that of a snake. The peculiar vocation of this forbidding-looking animal is to burrow, and Master Havakel (that was his name) was soon hard at work. Lying flat on his stomach, he scraped away till he had made a hole large enough to enter. "Hurrah! Havakel—*Shön mein hünd!*" cried his master. These exclamations excited him to a perfect frenzy of exertion, and he tore at the ground with his deformed paws till he wriggled himself into the cavity and disappeared. The sportsmen seemed as much excited as the dog. Selderneck, in particular, crouched on his hands and knees, now shouted encouragement down the hole, then with his ear laid to the ground listened attentively. All at once he uttered a prolonged "Huiseh!" which resembled the sharp hiss of escaping steam. A dozen of the sportsmen dropped to the ground and lay as if shot by the explosion! While I gazed in wonderment, one of them, starting to his feet with a loud hurrah, proclaimed that Havakel was giving tongue. Spades and pickaxes were immediately in requisition, but after digging out about six feet of earth and no sign of the dog appearing, it was concluded that the badger had taken another direction. After some time the alarm was given afresh, when digging to a considerable depth we were rewarded by a view of Havakel's hind legs. Having forced his enemy to his last intrenchment, he was holding him fast. Cries of "Bravo, Havakel! bring him out!" were

answered by a few fruitless efforts on the part of the dog to draw the badger from his place of refuge; but like the Irishman and the Tartar, it turned out that he could neither get him away, nor come himself, for their jaws were fast locked together. A few sound blows on the head with the butt of a rifle soon settled the badger, and Havakel giving himself a shake, trotted off in search of water. His late opponent was slung by his hind legs over the shoulder of one of the keepers, with directions to take him to the *Gnadiger Frau*, who was to have him made into a pie for our supper. At the idea of a badger pasty, I fancy my feelings were depicted on my countenance, for Grafenberg, bursting out laughing, told me they were considered a great delicacy in that part of Germany, and that a fashionable confectioner at Stuttgart would willingly give him eleven florins a head for the beasts without the skins. This account was corroborated by his companions; but while they were smacking their lips in anticipation of the treat, an unexpected accident deprived us of our promised dainty. The badger, who had been no party to the contract, finding that he was only stunned, resolved on making an effort to save himself from the cook's hands. In his struggles for liberty he fixed his teeth in a very tender part in the rear of his bearer, and poor Hans,

"Unable to conceal his pain,"

ran roaring back to us for help. Before we could get to his assistance, the badger had made off, and Hans returned home, followed by the jeers and laughter of his companions.

We dug out a couple more badgers, and then proceeded to beat the woods. After a tolerable day's shooting we came to a place where we expected to find some fine deer. It was my luck to be stationed next to Grécour, whose incessant talking would, I knew, prevent the game from coming to our side of the wood. I had given him one or two hints, which had the effect of quieting him for a moment; and I was beginning to have some hopes of a shot, when suddenly raising his voice to its highest pitch as the beaters were advancing, "*Attention, les voila!*" he exclaimed, and a fine herd of deer that were making straight for us, turned short round, and disappeared. A shot from the other side of the wood gave promise that they had not escaped the rifles of all our party. The Baron was the lucky man: he had brought down a noble stag, and I could not help remarking to Grécour that *à la chasse*, a silent companion was preferable to a talkative one. "*Ja wohl,*" replied he, mimicking Selderneck's gravity of manner.

In descending a steep bank I sprained my ankle, and as a grand *battue* was ordered for the next day, I determined to nurse my foot for the few intervening hours. I set off for the château alone, but my progress was so slow, that I was soon overtaken by Grécour, who having, he said, important letters to write, had hurried on before the rest of the sportsmen.

"Confess," said I, "that having no one to talk to when I was gone, and not liking to remain silent——"

"A good guess," said he, "but not exactly correct; for I have had a very interesting chat with one of the party who speaks French, and have learnt something that will materially affect my future prospects. — *Enfin*, it is settled I marry Albertine."

I stared. "Is that what your *chasseur* who spoke French told you?" I inquired.

"No; but he told me what came to the same thing, that she has 100,000 florins; so I shall write by to-night's post to announce my marriage to my family."

"Pray, have you asked either the lady's or her brother's consent?" asked I.

"Oh! as to Albertine's consent," replied he, with an air of ineffable self-satisfaction, "it is really paying myself no great compliment to suppose she prefers me to any of the drinking, smoking animals by whom she is surrounded. In fact, my dear friend," he continued, in a very confidential tone, "she made her preference so apparent at Frankfort, that while uncertain whether the match would suit me, I hesitated at accepting Grafenberg's invitation."

"Have you had good sport, Herr Baron?" called out a person on horseback who just then met us.

"*Ja wohl*," answered a deep voice at my side. I turned, and, to my astonishment, saw Selderneck, who had overtaken us while, absorbed in the interest of Grécour's communication, I had not observed he was our companion.)

"Ah! *mon cher*!" exclaimed the Frenchman, "*c'est à ne plus s'en tenir*, that eternal *ja wohl* again!"

"I thought you were at home long ago," said Grafenberg, who now joined us with the rest of the sportsmen. I told him of my sprained ankle, and, slackening their pace, we all sauntered on together.

On reaching the road leading to the village, we saw, a little in advance of us, the old man who had shown me the chapel on the preceding day. He was followed by a number of children of all ages.

"There goes Diederich and his train," said Grafenberg. "Old Diederich is a remarkable character: he is so passionately fond of children, that all his time and money are spent in their service. He is their playfellow in health and their nurse in sickness; in short, he is quite the providence of the village mothers, who leave their offspring in his care while they labour in the fields."

"I saw him yesterday," said I. "Has he not been a soldier?"

"Yes; in Napoleon's time he served with the French in Spain."

"I should like to talk with him about his campaigns," said Grécour.

"You would not find much to flatter your national vanity in his conversation," replied Grafenberg, laughing. "He holds your countrymen in horror, and calls them demons, whose evil example made others as fiendish as themselves."

"*Encore un Prussien*, I suppose," returned Grécour, evidently piqued. "*Ces pauvres Prussiens* — it must be confessed we handled them a little roughly at Jena and Berlin."

"*Ils fous l'ont pieu rentu à Leipsic et Paris.*"

... sport
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however, glad to see me; and when I spoke of his courage and humanity as they deserved, his countenance lighted up with an expression of pleasure.

"Your praises would make me happier," said he, "if I deserved them more; but for years a crime has weighed heavily on my conscience. It is only at the hour of my death that I can bear to tell my guilt. I served as a soldier in Spain, and you know in what manner the war was carried on in that part of the world. I would fain hope, that I was not so cruel as some there, but it was enough to harden a man's heart only to witness the atrocities committed. One day, after a long and wearisome march, we entered a town in Andalusia. As usual, the inhabitants had fled at our approach, and the houses were empty. We searched every where for food, of which we found but little. One of my comrades discovered a cask of wine, which we drank to the dregs; and our thirst increasing by what we had taken, we sallied out like madmen in hopes of finding more. As, with parched lips and burning throat, I pursued my way through a deserted street, I spied a Spaniard trying to enter a half-ruined house. He carried something under his cloak, which my heated imagination persuaded me was a skin of wine. I followed and laid my hand on his shoulder; the man was weak, and bent like a reed under my grasp, but seemed to clasp his burden only the tighter. 'Give it up,' I exclaimed, putting my bayonet to his breast—'give me the wine.' The Spaniard trembled like a leaf, '*No es vino, señor*,' said he. My drunken fury irritated by his refusal—'would you cheat me?' I cried, 'then none shall drink it;' thus saying, I made a furious thrust at his cloak, but, alas! blood followed the weapon's point. A piercing cry,—it rings even now in my ears, and the man dropping his cloak, discovered the bleeding body of an infant. My senses left me as the wretched father wrung his hands over his murdered child."

Overpowered at the dreadful recollection, the old man was unable to continue his tale. I only made out that the horror he felt, combined with the excited state of his blood, had thrown him into a violent fever, in which he had long struggled between life and death. On his recovery, he had been discharged as unfit for service.

When I called next day to enquire after the poor old fellow, he was no more.

EPIGRAM.

WHEN would-be Suicides in purpose fail—
 Who could not find a morsel though they needed—
 If Peter sends them for attempts to jail,
 What would he do to them if they succeeded?

T. H.

THE STORY OF CUSTANCE AND HER RING.

A TALE OF OLD ST. PAUL'S.

MASTER GUTHURON, the goldsmith of Guthuron's Lane, lay upon his death-bed. An aged and wealthy citizen was he, highly esteemed by his brethren and neighbours. So it was no wonder that his chamber should be crowded with old friends, all anxious, according to the simple, kindly usage of old times, to take a last farewell of their aged companion, and to join in prayer for the departing spirit. But the old man was too near death to receive comfort from the friendly words and numerous little attentions proffered by those around him, and he lay in a quiet doze, motionless, and apparently insensible.

"A worthy man, soothly, and a credit to our good city," said Hubert le Blunde, the notary of Ave Mary Lane, as he carefully wiped his pen, and replaced it in the case that contained the draft of the old man's will.

"A true christian—our Lady and all saints be merciful unto him!" said the parson of St. Anne's in the Willows, who had just learnt with great satisfaction that Master Guthuron had bequeathed twenty marks, and his large silver dish chased with the story of St. George and the Dragon, as a "corpse-gift" to that church.

"Ay, a good christian, father Elfrie," cried the nurse, who was on her knees before the hearthstone, stirring some spiced mixture in a silver porringer. "He hated foreigners as Sathanas, and always upheld the honour of our good city: no wonder years ago he was sorely mulcted."

"No wonder," replied father Elfrie. "A good man was he, and an honour to the guild of blessed St. Dunstan of the goldsmiths—a true Englishman, heaven's benison on him! How he hated Norman, Gascon, Poitevin, and, above all, Audemar l'Orfevre, the queen's goldsmith."

"Ay, 'twas he made all that strife about the king's jewels—just as though Master Guthuron, who could handle the graver like St. Dunstan himself, should trouble himself about paltry foreign jewels, and rob the king: more likely, I trow, for the king to rob us," said the nurse, who, as the widow of a goldsmith, felt bound to uphold the honour of that fraternity, and who, as an inhabitant of London in the reign of King Henry the Third, felt equally bound to exercise that gift of free-speaking on political matters which some people think belongs only to this present enlightened day, but which, we can assure them, was possessed, in an enviable perfection, by the free Englishmen of the thirteenth.

"He was an honour to our guild," said Adam Frowyck, the under-warden, with a sorrowful shake of the head as he contemplated the

delicately-wrought silver crucifix which hung opposite the dying man ;
 "aye, no one could do work like *that*."

"No, nor gold filagree either," said Nicholas Ducket, the assay-master, "saving, perchance, Osbert of Ludgate. 'Tis strange what hath separated two such long-standing friends as they, but of late years they never care to meet."

"It *is* strange," replied Adam Frowyck ; "but ever since their houses were searched, on pretence that some of the king's stolen jewels were there, they have never looked kindly on each other."

"But still, when death draws nigh, there should be an end of feuds," said Nicholas Ducket ; "and therefore I have sent to Osbert of Ludgate, but he hath not yet come."

"I pray you, good master, send again," whispered the nurse, "for when his mind wanders, as it did last night, all his talk is of Master Osbert. 'Nay, say not so, good Osbert,' said he : and then 'You know it all—all, I say ; but are not we enforced to be secret ? Look, yonder is the queen's goldsmith ; how cunning he looks. But, good Osbert, remember, I have aided you ere now,' saith he. I promise you I was sorely affrighted, he did stare so ; and had it not been for the piece of holy Saturday taper that was burning" (an especial charm against evil spirits and all the terrors of the night), "I doubt whether I should ever have heard St. Martin's bells ring for prime."

"Poor soul ! he was wandering," said the assay-master : "and as to the queen's goldsmith, ye knew it was through him that his house was searched and Osbert was fined."

"And truly that, methinks, was the cause why Osbert hath of late been so cold toward him," continued the nurse ; "but depend on't, Master Guthuron hath something on his mind. 'Is Osbert here?' said he ; and then he drew the curtain aside ; 'where is he?' said he again. Do, good Master Ducket, I pray ye, send once more, for he cannot last long—'tis only three hours to the turn of tide, and then he'll be gone. But think you what would come to pass an' he died with aught unsaid which he would have said ; as sure as the gospel of Nicodemus he will come to us again !" and the nurse cast a terrified look toward her patient, — "just as old Simon Eversfield did, who came, as all the ward knows, three nights running, and looked in at Alcey Marlowe's upper window, and could not be quieted until the great oak chest, and the cup, and the two bezants were given to his god-daughter."

Yes, well did every one in the room remember that story ; for Simon Eversfield's *post-mortem* visitation of the old woman who had robbed him on his death-bed had been the sole talk in the wards of Cheap and Aldersgate for the space of two weeks, superseding alike thoughts about the termination of the great city suit between the lord mayor and the abbot of Westminster, about the arrival of the elephant—"that strange and most wondrous beast," as Matthew Paris most justly terms him, although with his pencil he certainly does but imperfect justice to his huge proportions,—nay, so marvellously did this ghost-story occupy the minds of the citizens, that for three whole days—so Master Reginald of Dover declares— not one word of grum-

bling against the king, or his uncle the archbishop, was heard throughout that great city mart of news and business, Westcheap.

"I will send another messenger forthwith," said Nicholas Ducket, eagerly. "Saints forbid he should die with aught on his mind! Bid Osbert come quickly," continued he, addressing one of the many visitants who had offered to go.

That name seemed to recall the old man to consciousness. He opened his eyes, and attempted to raise himself. "Is *he* here?" said he.

"Good father, be composed," whispered the young man, who had been sitting at the bed's head, supporting the dying man's pillow, "he is coming forthwith."

"Alan, my dear grandson," said the old man, in a low and exhausted voice, stretching out his feeble arm as though to draw him nearer, "listen to me — mark my words."

The young man knelt by the bedside, and leant his head close to his grandfather's; for the voice of the dying man was as the faintest whisper. "You have the key of the jewel casket, of the ebony box." The young man drew from the purse suspended at his girdle two small keys, and put them into the old man's hand. "Keep them; all is yours," said Master Guthuron, faintly; "but take heed of Osbert! — Is *he* here?"

"No, good father, but coming."

"Draw nearer, Alan, draw nearer. A good grandson hast thou been to me; and heaven reward thee. But what is that noise? Some one is coming; is it *he*?"

The young man turned round; there were footsteps on the stairs, but not the heavy tread of an old man, staff in hand, but light, aye, musical. So thought Alan, for well did he know that step, and that Custance, the fairest maiden in Ludgate—his own Custance—the playmate of his boyish days, the ladylove of his later, was approaching; and he rose up to meet her. "Dear Custance, and wherefore is your uncle not here?" whispered he.

"Not here?" replied the maiden, laying aside her long mantle: "methought he had been here long ago. But, good Master Guthuron, how is he?" Alan shook his head and led her to the bedside.

Custance threw herself on her knees beside the bed, and her long amber hair fell like a gleam of light on the dark coverlid, and over the pale wrinkled hand which she raised to her lips. "Good Master Guthuron, ye know me?" said she.

"Yes, my sweet god-daughter! I knew *you* would not forget me!"

"Heaven forbid I should, or my uncle either; but he will be here ere long."

"Good Alan, bring me the ebony box, — be quick," said the old man, hurriedly. "Ay, Custance, I have not forgotten you." The box was brought, but his late exertion was too much for the old man, and he had sunk back, fainting.

Some time elapsed ere consciousness returned. "Is *he* come?" was the first whispered question.

"No," replied the grandson. The dying man grasped the young

ian's arm convulsively, and turned his eyes with a hurried and intense expression toward him. "One word to yourself—to yourself only."

The bystanders drew back; and still grasping his grandson's hand, Master Guthuron whispered, "In the wall behind this bed is a silverasket. Now beware of *that ring*. Let him never see it! 'Twas a faultless stone. Stones have wondrous virtues, as *he* well knows; so beware lest Osbert ever see *that ring*, for 'twill bring you into sore trouble."

"What ring, good father?"

"*That ring*! I have told you all, so now he may come: but stay, where is the ebony box? Ay, Custance, this chain is my last workmanship; 'twas for a marriage gift, but 'tis my dying one. Take it, Custance, with my blessing on you, and my dear grandson." Master Guthuron drew out a long delicate gold chain, and with feeble hand attempted to fling it round the maiden's neck, but sank back exhausted. That effort was his last; he fell into a profound slumber, which, ere morning dawned, was exchanged for the sleep of death.

It was in vain that message after message had been sent to Osbert of Ludgate; he never came: and when Adam Frowyck, the under-warden, called on him to inquire the reason—for the London guilds exercised no little authority over their refractory members in those days—his answers were so unsatisfactory, and his general deportment so strange, that the worthy under-warden felt half inclined to solve the difficulty by considering him as under the influence of an evil eye—as general an excuse among the inhabitants of ancient London for unaccountable aberrations of conduct, as the nerves, or the weather is in the present day.

Well, a source of much anxiety was this conduct of Osbert of Ludgate, both to Alan de Hotham and to Custance,—the more so as they looked forward to being married at Whitsuntide, and it was now past Easter. For the present, however, all Alan's attention was fixed upon performing the obsequies of his grandfather with due honour; and great were the preparations he made, for among the inhabitants of ancient London many a Saxon custom still lingered, and none were more rigidly observed than that of spending immense sums in funeral gifts, and at the funeral entertainment.

And abundant was the provision of wax tapers, to be carried by the followers; of clothing, and bread, and ale, to be given to the poor; of muscatel and choice ipocras for the mourning company, and of provision of all kinds, for every one who might choose to come to the funeral feast. And goodly was the procession which on the appointed day moved in solemn order from Master Guthuron's house to the little church of St. Anne's in the Willows, hard by, the church to which the guild of the goldsmiths always repaired on festival days; for there was their chantry, and their chaplain, and there many a brother was sleeping his last slumber.

On they came, surpliced priests, raising, with mellow voices, the "*Dies Iræ*,"—that beautiful poem albeit monkish Latin, and which defies translation; and then, preceded by the sexton with his death-bell, and

the parson of St. Anne's, who bore the beautifully-chased silver dish, the corpse-gift to his parish church, came the body of the aged goldsmith upon the open bier, borne by six brethren of the guild, the corpse literally swathed in the pure white "winding-sheet," from shoulder to foot, with face uncovered, and hands clasped upon the breast above the delicate crucifix, whose surpassing beauty had been remarked by the under-warden himself. But the corpse was not borne along merely swathed in the winding-sheet; the splendid pall of the guild, which was of richest velvet, and decorated with ornaments of solid silver, was spread over the bier, and the rich fringe almost swept the rugged way as it was reverently borne along by his old companions. Immediately behind walked the grandson, and then, in their livery-gowns, came Gregory de Rockeslye, master of the worshipful guild, William de Farendone, and Adam de Frowycke, the wardens, and Nicholas Ducket, the assay-master (it is right to be particular as to names, for all these were important personages in their day, and all stood up most boldly in the subsequent wars of the Barons for the rights of their good city). Next followed all the brethren and sisters of the guild, two and two, many of the brethren bearing some cup, or salver, or choice jewel, the workmanship of that hand which should never hold graver more; and among these, with downcast and sullen look, walked Osbert of Ludgate, his beautiful niece in a long funeral mantle, over which was the rich chain the dying man had flung round her neck, leaning on his arm. But no obsequies among our kind-hearted forefathers were complete without the crowd of old, and maimed, and blind, who, having received their dole of bread and ale, followed, clad in the coarse black clokes which were always given them, and these now closed the procession, taper in hand.

How calm and pleasant looked the little church of St. Anne's in the Willows, with its sparkling brooklet flowing close beside the massive grey city wall, and girdling in the green grave-yard; and the clustering trees, with their long waving branches half concealing the low square tower. How quiet was the spot, although just beneath the lofty spires of St. Martin's-le-Grand, and scarce a stone's throw from populous, busy Westcheap; and now, when the crowd pressed round the bier, as it was set down beneath the low porch, to take a last look of their old neighbour, the solemn toll of the passing bell and the measured chant of the "*De profundis*," alone broke the silence.

The little grave-yard was full, and among the still gathering crowd two men, clad in the short cloaks and "popinjay garb," as our London forefathers termed it, of Poictou, pressed in among the long-gowned and hooded citizens. "Surely I well remember that face," said the elder, turning to his companion; and pressing still closer, he peered over the heads of the crowd who were kneeling round the bier, "surely 'tis Guthuron the goldsmith,—ay, Audemar, your father remembered him well."

"But who is she," whispered the younger, gazing, as though spell-bound, on the beautiful maiden who knelt close beside the bier, with her white hands clasped in prayer,— "who is she?"

"I know not; but look at that chain. St. Mary! the London maiden must be wealthy to wear that," was the reply.

But the chain had no attraction for the younger stranger; *he* was gazing on the downcast eyes and rosy softly-moving lips of the fair girl, and on the long tresses of amber hair, which, touched by the slant sun-beams, outshone the bright gold on her neck. "Good Hugo, who is she?" again he whispered.

"Soothly, I know not," was the whispered reply, "unless she be daughter or ward to him, who stands beside her. Well do I remember *him*, and well did your father too: 'tis Osbert of Ludgate!"

Low as was that whisper, it reached the quick ear of the goldsmith of Ludgate; he started and looked up. His eyes met the fixed gaze of the stranger, and he hastily turned away.

"Do inquire who she is?" earnestly whispered the young man. "Saints grant she may be his daughter, for methinks, if he knew I was the son of the queen's own goldsmith, he could not dare to say me nay."

"Ah! young Audemar, ye know not so much of the London guilds as I do. Yonder fair maiden is doubtless betrothed to one of its brethren."

"And if she be, is not the will of the queen above that of the guild of goldsmiths? And as to Osbert yonder, did not my father maintain to his dying day that he saw some of the king's jewels in his possession?—methinks he will scarcely dare to refuse *me*!"

"Nay, speak not here of this," said his more prudent companion, drawing him away; "remember, we are but two; and, by St. Nicholas of Limoges, I would sooner rouse a hornet's nest than bring aught of notice upon us."

The young man smiled a significant smile; he glanced a look of contempt toward the brethren of the guild of the goldsmiths. "Well, I vow a fair silver candlestick, one ell in height, to the church of St. Nicholas of Limoges," said he, "if he will aid my suit for yonder fair maiden. St. Mary! who had ever thought to have seen such beauty in Saxon London!"

The obsequies of Guthuron the goldsmith were ended; and now eagerly did his grandson search after the silver casket. Not long did he seek. Just behind the old man's bed, and concealed by the hangings, he found a small door, and within the object of his search met his view. Cautiously did the young man open it. There were pieces of broken jewellery; beneath them some valuable gems; but concealed by these and at the bottom of the casket, was a small agate box, which doubtless contained the mysterious ring. Hastily did Alan de Hotham open it—but *two* rings were there! Each was most beautiful and costly: one displayed a sapphire of faultless brilliancy, the other a splendid ruby; and each was similar in ornament, and each of equal value. How earnestly, how bewilderedly, did the young man look upon them! Which was that ring to which the fears of the dying man had so emphatically pointed? which that ring which Osbert of Ludgate was never to see?

Long and earnest was his scrutiny of the two rings ; long and anxious his musings, even till twilight came on. At length, wearied with fruitless conjectures, he replaced the rings in the box, and deposited it in a still more secure place ; then lighting his lamp, he sat down to the work on which he had been engaged before his grandfather's last illness—a gold standing cup, which was to be finished by Pentecost, for the Earl of Savoy, the queen's uncle. Intent on his work, Alan de Hotham soon lost all anxiety, nay, even thought respecting the mysterious ring ; for this was the most important work he had ever set about, and he had determined to bestow on it his utmost skill. And then, when completed, with what pride would he take it to Osbert of Ludgate, and ask him, wayward as he had of late shown himself, whether he could deny to so skilful a goldsmith the hand of his beautiful niece.

Pleasantly passed the days while the young goldsmith sat closely at his work ; and each evening, when he met Custance in the north aisle of St. Paul's, he exultingly told her how well his work proceeded, and how William de Farendone himself had declared that he would do honour to their guild, and how anxiously he longed for the day when he should place the finished cup before her uncle, and challenge his admiration and his guerdon. But Custance seemed strangely woe-begone. "Heaven grant you success, dear Alan," said she, "but my uncle hath strangely turned against you. Alas! he talks strange things too, about talismen, and charms, and swears that Master Guthuron gained his wealth and high standing solely through these."

The young goldsmith did not smile. The belief in the power of gems was one of the most widely-spread forms of superstition during the middle ages ; and among the inhabitants of London in the thirteenth century it was held with unwavering faith. Each precious stone was thought to possess peculiar virtues ; and these, by some mysterious power, were communicated to the possessor. Marbodius, a right learned prelate, had written on this very subject two centuries before, in choice Alexandrines ; and deans and chapters had from time to time taken it up, especially if some Jew possessed of valuable gems came under their pious notice : so no wonder was it that Alan de Hotham listened with anxious attention, while the mysterious ring recurred to his mind. "Stones have wondrous virtues, as *he* well knows," remarked the dying man. What if Osbert of Ludgate suspected that he was possessed of some such wondrous stone ? — but, then, which was it ? Guthuron had spoken only of one ring, and there were *two*.

It was in vain that the young goldsmith now made every inquiry respecting the affair of the king's jewels. That some had been taken from the treasure-house and sold in London was a well-known fact ; and that Guthuron of Guthuron's Lane, and Osbert of Ludgate, then warm friends, had been suspected of purchasing them, was also well known : but eighteen years had passed since then ; and what chiefly dwelt on the minds of those who had been interested in the subject was the rapacity of the king's messengers, who seemed determined to make the charge brought against two of their number, a pretext for

mulcting the whole guild. Thus disappointed in his inquiries, the young goldsmith again resumed his graver, and proceeded to finish the golden cup, still hoping that by some means he might learn how his grandfather had become possessed of one or both the rings.

Meanwhile there were strange rumours respecting Osbert of Ludgate. This thorough-bred Saxon goldsmith, who in former days had suffered so severely, and, as most said, so unjustly, at the hands of the king, had been seen in company with outlandish men (the guilds of ancient London would as soon have admitted Jews or Paynims as foreigners), even with Audemar l'Orfevre, the son of that very goldsmith, on whose charge his house had been searched, and himself fined. How could this be? and wherefore should the son of the Poictevin goldsmith seek acquaintance with the goldsmith of Ludgate? Much marvelling was there about it; but these rumours reached not the ears of Alan de Hotham, who now, as Pentecost approached, sat from cockcrow to even-song engaged at his work, and only stole out each evening to meet Custance, and tell her how rapidly the work proceeded, and how soon he hoped to place the finished cup before her uncle.

But a deeper cloud seemed gathering each evening on the brow of Custance. "Would ye had not staid so long away," said she.

"Nay, dear Custance! did not your uncle bid me not think of you until I could take my place among the first of our guild. I have vowed never to enter his house until I bring the cup; and then he cannot deny me."

Poor Custance! she dared not tell him that another had sought her hand, and that her uncle was scarcely inclined to refuse it; nor could she tell him, so joyful and so full of hope as he seemed, what mysterious hints had been thrown out about Master Guthuron's wealth, and how that Alan himself, wrought by charm and spell; so she sorrowfully took her way homeward.

It wanted but ten days to Pentecost: the cup was finished; and eagerly and joyfully did the young goldsmith take his way to Osbert of Ludgate. He entered the room where the old man was sitting, and carefully uncovering the cup, placed it before him. An involuntary exclamation of admiration burst from Osbert: "Whose workmanship is this?" said he.

"Mine only," replied the young goldsmith proudly, "so good Osbert, my guerdon."

The old man started, and looked up. "What guerdon doth Guthuron's grandson ask of me?" said he, sternly.

"Good Osbert, said you not that your niece should not be mine until I could take place among the first of our guild? Look at the cup, good Osbert; may I not ask my guerdon?"

"Did Guthuron give me *mine*?" said Osbert.

The young man gazed earnestly at the speaker. "What was it?" said he.

"Away," cried the old man, "away! Guthuron deceived me years ago; nor even on his death-bed did he repent it. Away; but the time will come, ere long, when even your charmed ring will not avail to secure you. Away!"

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period always impressed on articles of pure gold or silver), and heard the praises bestowed by the chief men of the guild on his work, all fear of approaching evil vanished from his mind.

While the young goldsmith proceeded to the mansion of the Earl of Savoy, Osbert of Ludgate, with Audemar l'Orfevre, proceeded on a different errand to the king's treasurer. It was, as we have said, near Pentecost; and, as was customary during the reign of Henry the Third, a mighty feast was to be provided, while there was not a single mark in the exchequer to furnish it. And, at his wits' end as he revolved in his mind the various ways and means which he yet dared not adopt to fill that empty exchequer, the recollection of that charge brought against two of the London goldsmiths, of purchasing some of the king's jewels, recurred to his mind.

Reginald of Dover, indeed, declares that William de Haverhull would never have thought of this, had it not been for the prompting of a certain demon in the form of Audemar l'Orfevre the younger, who, not content with striving to obtain the beautiful Custance, sought also to ruin her lover. How this might have been we know not; but certain is it that Osbert of Ludgate was led into the presence of the king's treasurer, to be examined on oath, "touching the matter of the king's jewels;" and so well did he exculpate himself, and so cruelly involve not merely the memory of his old friend, but the credit of the poor young goldsmith, that the treasurer immediately issued his precept to search the house, seize the property, and commit Alan de Hotham to custody; while, anxious to conciliate so powerful a guild as the goldsmiths, to many of whom both the king and queen were largely indebted, he addressed a most loving letter to them, expressing his sorrow at being compelled to proceed to such extremities, and praying them to see that justice was done.

In the afternoon of the same day, therefore, messengers were sent to take possession of old Master Guthuron's house in the king's name, and to make diligent search for the treasure therein contained. But, indignant as the guild of goldsmiths felt (notwithstanding the right loving letter) at this convenient method of providing for the royal Pentecost feast, their indignation knew no bounds when they beheld Osbert of Ludgate, a born and bred dweller in London, a brother of their own guild, aiding the king's messengers in their search. Such a thing had never been known since St. Dunstan had founded their brotherhood; and such a thing could only arise from some peculiar infernal agency.

"He is mansworn and accursed!" shouted some of the angry crowd. "Bring hither three pieces of barley bread that the priest hath blest, and see if he dare to swallow them."

"Let the master and wardens put him on his trial,—hot iron, or hot water," cried others.

"Ay, good folk," said old Aylwin Sparkenhoe; "would that we might! But the good old times of our fathers are passed away, and therefore is the hot iron and hot water trial forbidden us."

"Then take and hang him right over the door," shouted Gurth Strong-i'-the-Arm; and he pressed forward, followed by a score of

stout fellows, determined to put his suggestion into instant execution.

The appearance of Alan de Hotham, who, unknowing what had happened, was quietly returning home, and his seizure by the king's messengers, roused the fury of the crowd to the utmost height, and they rushed to his rescue.

"Take him off instantly," said the chief in command, "and search carefully for a magic ring that he wears."

It was with the utmost difficulty that the prisoner was borne away to Newgate (even then a prison); and again the crowd, with Gurth Strong-i'-the-Arm at their head, pressed forward to inflict summary vengeance on Osbert of Ludgate; when Gregory de Rockeslye, the master of the guild, came forward. "We meddle not with you," said he to the chief of the company; "but Osbert of Ludgate, belonging to our guild, hath brought charges against a brother which we deem untrue. We accuse him of false swearing; and as the trial by ordeal is forbidden, we demand that he shall clear himself as holy church shall appoint, and therefore we take him into our keeping."

"And that truth may be manifest," said Aylwin Sparkenboe, "my counsel is, let him clear himself, an' he dare, before the shrine of St. Erkenwald in St. Paul's; and there to-morrow morning let him be brought, fasting, and, with bare hand laid on the holy chest, let him, if he be not mansworn, repeat what he hath said before the lord treasurer."

Shouts of assent followed this suggestion. "Osbert of Ludgate," said the master, "this thou shalt do. But darest thou?"

"I dare!" said Osbert, hoarsely; but he turned deadly pale, and, followed by the angry shouts of the crowd, he was led away.

Evening came on ere the search in Master Guthuron's house was completed; but, all unconscious of what had befallen, Custance hastened to her accustomed trysting-place, the north aisle of St. Paul's. Long she waited; the twilight deepened; the light of the dim tapers now began to shed a brighter ray along the aisles; scarcely a footfall might be heard: but yet Alan came not. She advanced toward the choir, now deserted, when, ere she was aware, a low voice in earnest conversation met her ear, and the name Guthuron was pronounced. There were two aged women, who, having finished their evening devotions in the chapel of St. Radegunde, were now talking over what was foremost in every mind, and from them she learnt that Alan de Hotham was a prisoner! "Alas! poor young man, I fear me he hath lost that ring which old Master Guthuron set such store by," said the other. "I had it from a sure hand that nought of ill should happen to him while he kept that. 'Twas a faultless sapphire; ay, often have I seen it, and 'twas proof against an evil eye!"

Custance listened no longer: she turned away in agony. "Oh, it is I who have been the cause!" said she: "this very ring which he gave me might have secured him from ill."

Blinded by her tears, she wandered onward, up the marble steps of the chancel, and, half unconsciously, sat down at the foot of the jewelled chest that enshrined St. Erkenwald's bones, then, taking the

ring from her bosom, she gazed anxiously but bewilderedly upon it. Long she sat there: at length the sound of approaching footsteps aroused her. She started up. Some one was approaching; and, scarcely conscious of what she did, she slipped the fatal ring on the nearest pinnacle of the delicately-wrought silver work that surrounded the shrine, and then, kneeling down, she prayed that the eye, not of saint or angel, but of Him who seeth and overruleth all, might watch unceasingly over her lover. Her prayer ended, Custance arose, with a lightened heart, and returned to her desolate home.

It was early in the morning when the master, and wardens, and brethren of "the Guild of St. Dunstan of the Mystery of the Goldsmiths" entered the church of St. Paul; and, preceded by the dean and his chaplains, they proceeded up the choir, and stopped before the shrine of that saint who was considered as London's peculiar guardian—the worthy Bishop Erkenwald. Here Osbert of Ludgate was brought forward, and after a warning given—not in courtly Anglo-Norman, not in priestly Latin, but in the ancient language of England—he was commanded to advance, and placing his right hand on the shrine, to repeat the accusation against Alan de Hotham which he had made the day before, in the presence of the king's treasurer. Reverently the dean then lifted the covering which each night was spread over the shrine, and he summoned Osbert of Ludgate to come forward.

But Osbert stood with eyes fixed on the shrine, awe-stricken, and unable to move. "O that ring!" gasped he, "*that* ring!"

The dean looked—there was a beautiful sapphire ring hanging on the foremost pinnacle; but how came it there? Well did Osbert of Ludgate know that ring; and, crushed with awe and remorse, he threw himself, with a bitter cry, on the pavement.

"Stand up, Osbert of Ludgate, and confess," said the dean; "know you aught of this ring?"

"Holy father, too well; and it hath been placed there—the saints alone can tell how—to prove that I am indeed mansworn! Years ago, when Guthuron and I were friends, he did me great service, and, in return, I made that very ring, and before this shrine did I place it on his finger, calling heaven to witness that in weal or woe I would be steadfast to him and his. O! how have I fulfilled that vow! But Guthuron became wealthy, and I poor; and then 'twas said he had a wondrous ring, a ruby ring, by which he obtained his good fortune. And then I remembered that among jewels which I had sold him there was such a ring, so I sought after it, and tried to obtain it again. But Guthuron refused, and we became estranged; but still I hoped that on his death-bed he might think of our long-past friendship, and bequeath the ring to me. He did not; and then Audemar l'Orfevre came to me with offers for my niece, and threats that if I refused him he would charge me again with the theft of the king's jewels, and he offered, too, that if I would join with him against Alan de Hotham, the ruby ring, if found, should be mine. Holy father! I

loving letter to the lord
marks from his good cit
would come to St. Paul's
and pay due honour to th
citizens, that they voted
and this so pleased the
paired, knelt reverently
two candles in his honour
great edification to the wo
an angel had been seen i
ring on the shrine.

Too pleased was Custan
of the apocryphal angel; a
he led his fair bride thi
session of his sapphire rin
said to be wrought by it, a
his time, it was considered
syghte," the real tale faded
of Master Reginald of Dove
of Custance and her Ring."

THE BATTUE.

—“A pull all together.”
Ode to the Isis.

INTRODUCTION.

IN our last paper, “The Brace of Birds,” our object was to show, not so much the miseries entailed upon the lower classes and the farmers by the Game Bill itself, as by its adjunct, the Sale-of-Game Bill. Our opinion of this adjunct, founded on some years’ experience in a tolerably well preserved country, is, that it has led many gentlemen to become poulterers instead of mere preservers, and to look upon game as a source of revenue rather than of relaxation. The *excessive* preservation of pheasants, partridges, and hares, has been productive of serious losses to farming tenants; and holds out an irresistible lure to the labourer to exchange the handle of the plough, the spade, and the hoe, for the stock of a gun, and to seek free access to the beer-barrel of the public-house by means of a gun-barrel, rather than by the fruits of honest labour.

To a fair sprinkling of game, fairly preserved, and a fair day’s shooting in fair weather, no fair sportsman can object; but to go out fowling, in foul weather, and slaughtering pheasants tamer than barn-door fowls, we do consider “a deed most foul,” as Macbeth observed when he was going out to have a shot in the wood of Dun-sinane.

Our object in this paper is to show the effects of this same adjunct upon a class — far above that whence we procured our former *dramatis personæ* — the lords and ladies of the soil which produces the oak, the elm, and other noble trees, under whose shade are nurtured, sometimes with more care than is bestowed upon their own families,

The pheasant with his varied vest,
 Admired less for flesh than feather;
 The partridge with his horse-shoe breast,
 And grouse that feeds among the heather.

But before we begin our little tale, we cannot resist relating a circumstance closely bearing upon the subject we are about to illustrate, and which occurred within our ken.

We dwelt near to one of the good old school of country gentlemen, who deemed it a part of his social duties to keep a hospitable board, and a house as open as his heart. At a certain period of every year

he had been accustomed to receive from a neighbour, who was blessed with a park, a haunch of venison; for which the keeper received a fee of half-a-guinea, and of which all his neighbours within a certain imaginary circle were invited to partake.

All of a sudden — no reason being assigned — the noble haunch was superseded by the ignominious shoulder, which was very properly committed to the mercies of those who might, in their ignorance, mistake it for mutton — the servants.

A second season came round, and a second shoulder was sent; which was, still more properly, sent back to the sender, as a hint not to send another — which was taken.

Our old friend could not quite make the matter out. The venison-grower and he were as good friends as ever. Nothing had occurred to interrupt the harmony in which they had always lived; of course, he could not demand an explanation of a brother squire as to why a wrong joint had been sent, although he could and would have done so of his butcher; so the matter dropped, and the annual venison-feast dropped too.

It so happened, that we went up to London with our old friend, who, always "on hospitable thoughts intent," looked out for something to take back with him wherewith to tickle the palates of his neighbours. At a celebrated fish-shop in the far west of London, he saw a string of well-fatted and well-hung haunches of venison. He stopped his carriage, alighted, and having selected the fattest, inquired where it was bred.

"In Mr. ———'s park, sir: I take all his bucks and game, at least the prime parts, and he takes it out in fish."

"Whe-ew-ewh!" whistled our old friend, as he paid three guineas and a half for the haunch — "Whe-ew-ewh — the murder's out."

He said no more; but when we returned home, a large party was invited to eat of the haunch.

"Fine-flavoured venison indeed," said some one. "Who sent it to you?"

"No one; but if you approve of the flavour of it you can have one any day by sending three guineas and a half in money or fish to Mr. ——— there. He sold it, and I bought it — not of him, but of his fishmonger in ——— Street."

Mr. ——— who was present — purposely invited — drank off a glass of port so hurriedly that it went "the wrong way:" he was obliged to leave the room; and we never saw him at our old friend's table afterwards. Poor man! he had not above four or five thousand per annum, which may account for his being willing to barter for instead of buying his fish.

Now to my tale.

CHAPTER I.

AMONG the fashionable departures, announced in a morning paper, was "Mr. Gretton Denbury, from Long's Hotel, for a few days"

shooting in the extensive and well-preserved domains of Sir Grice Pounceforth, at Veriton Grange, Suffolk;" and on the morning of the day named in the paper, the Orwell steam-boat, bound for Ipswich, ere she left her moorings, received on her deck, among other passengers and luggage, two large portmanteaus, two tall men, evidently servant and master, and two very large gun-cases amalgamated into one.

The servant having deposited the luggage in the hands of the responsible person on board, dived down into the depth of the fore-cabin, and was no more seen. The master, carelessly wrapped up in a pilot-coat, and wearing a seal-skin cap on his head, drew a volume from his pocket, and although the weather was somewhat cold and foggy, seemed to despise a November air, and having placed himself on a bench amidships, quietly perused his book.

Two "heavy swells," dressed in the excess of Cockney-sporting fashion, came on board, with one servant and two dogs, just as the warps were cast off. They gave their orders to their servant in loud vulgar tones, made themselves very fussy with the captain and other men on board, no doubt with the intention of impressing upon their fellow-voyagers the notion that they were somebodies. Seeing that there were but few females on board, and those few belonging to quite the lower classes, occupying the fore-castle, they turned their attentions to the male passengers, and observing Mr. Gretton Denbury "taking it cool," as they said, but rather too "roughly togged out" to be "any body uncommon," they walked up to him, and tapping him on the shoulder, asked how many miles it might be to Ipswich.

Gretton looked at them for a moment, and although very good-natured, and not at all inclined to display any pride, he could not fail to see through the vulgarity of their natures; so he quietly said,—

"You had better inquire of my servant: you will find him in the fore-cabin."

The twain looked exceeding fierce; but Gretton did not observe their looks, for his eyes were fixed upon his book.

"Captain," said one of them, "who is that cursed cool fellow there, in a pea-coat?"

"In that ugly seal-skin cap—there—pretending to be literary?" added the other.

"Wait till we've cleared the Pool before you ask questions.—Ease her! Stop her!" &c. &c. &c.

"Curse *his* impudence," said the first of the speakers, whom we may as well introduce at once as Jim Smith—a knowing shot at Highbury Barn.

"They're a very low set," added Tom Wiggins, a well-known frequenter of "The Ring." "Let us go below and get some breakfast."

This meal appeared to last as far as Gravesend, and when the pair came on deck, each with a cigar in his mouth, it was evident that the natural had not been limited to tea and coffee. They chatted to every body, swaggered about the deck, and looked very killingly at a pretty young woman who sat beside an old weather-beaten sailor,

nursing an infant in the bows of the vessel. At last they addressed her, and became so rude in their observations that the old sailor bid her go below, and then, having seen that she was out of sight and hearing, quietly asked Messrs. Jim Smith and Tom Wiggins if they really were rash enough to mistake themselves for gentlemen.

"What will you take to drink, old fellow?" asked Mr. Jim Smith.

"Don't you wish you may inherit a fortune?" added Mr. Wiggins; "a bunch of fives, for instance,—look out, old one." And before the poor old sailor was aware of it, he received a severe cuff on his tempest-beaten forehead.

"Shame—shame—to strike an old man like that," said the passengers and the crew.

"Stand aside," cried the sailor; "old as I am, it never shall be said that I took a blow without returning it."

"Hold, my fine old man—your strength has been wasted in the service of your country, doubtless. Leave it to a younger arm to protect your grey hairs."

The sailor looked round to see who his defender was, and perceived the young man, Gretton Denbury, who had been so quietly engaged in reading abaft the funnel. "Bless you, sir," said he, "but I'm worth something yet, when my daughter is insulted by such whipper-snappers as those."

"Jim Smith and his friend Tom Wiggins enjoyed the scene amazingly, as it appeared by their antics, for the one was "taking an observation" with his fingers, and the other winking furiously, and putting himself in a boxing attitude.

"Are you not ashamed of yourselves, to insult an aged man?" asked Gretton, in a determined tone.

"Who the —— are you?" said Mr. Wiggins. "Go to ——;" but before the vulgar word passed his lips he was on his back at the further side of the vessel, from a well-directed blow of Denbury's fist.

Jim Smith declared "he'd never *stand* that." He did not for half a second. He was lying beside his friend before he had time to speak even in his behalf.

An unalloyed shout of joy from the old sailor, in which he was joined by the passengers and the ship's crew, proclaimed to Messrs. Smith and Wiggins that their proceedings were unpopular. They, therefore, demanded Mr. Gretton Denbury's card—which was not given to them—called him a snob, and retired into a side cabin, to enjoy the remainder of the voyage in company with their servant, who seemed to make himself "one of us."

CHAPTER II.

"SIR GRICE POUNCEFORTH'S carriage waits for Mr. Gretton Denbury," said an hotel commissioner, coming on board, as the Orwell reached the quay. Gretton stepped ashore amidst the respectful salutations of his fellow-voyagers.

"That's the fellow's name. is it?" We will find out who and what he is, when we get back to town," said Jim Smith.

"And take the shine out of him too," added Tom Wiggins. But let us follow that chap that announced the carriage; we shall learn from him a little more about him."

The commissioner, on being questioned, could only reply that the gentleman was a friend of Sir Grice Pounceforth, of Veriton Grange, and was doubtless going there to join the grand battue, which was to commence on the following day.

"Veriton Grange! Why that is the very place where George Dareall means us to shoot to-morrow. He has a snug little bit of freehold right between two preserves, and would not sell it, though this Sir Grice something has offered thousands for it, to save himself from the gallows," said Jim Smith.

At this moment they were joined by the identical George Dareall, a retired publican, who had made his fortune by poaching and game-selling. He drove up in a flashy-coloured phaeton, and having saluted his friends, by raising his elbow, bid them jump in, traps and all, as he was ready for a start.

On their road the Londoners did not fail to acquaint their friend with the treatment they had met with from the supercilious stranger. George did not sympathise with his friends in the slightest degree; but laughed so excessively at the notion of two scientific men having been floored by one of the uninitiated, that they were very indignant, and talked of sending a challenge that very night to Mr. Gretton Denbury, to fight either with fists or pistols, or whatever weapon he might prefer.

"Don't talk like a couple of fools," said the elegant George Dareall. "If you were to send a challenge, do you think a high chap like that, asked down here to meet ministers and members of parliament, would take any notice of it? Pooh! I know them well. You shall take your revenge out of the pheasants and hares. Rely upon it, it is much pleasanter shooting, for they cannot return your fire."

Jim Smith and Tom Wiggins of course laughed at their host's wit, although they were in a very bad humour; and as they had been drinking and smoking all day long, they were very soon tipsy after they had indulged at their host's expense. Before they went to bed they had pledged each other in many a glass not to leave the country before they had either caned or horsewhipped, or in some manner avenged themselves upon Mr. Gretton Denbury; which was so very amusing to George Dareall, that he laughed excessively, and offered to lay them a pony each that if they met him they would not dare even to speak to him, much less to lay a hand or foot upon him. "Done—done." The bets were taken and booked by George. Tom Wiggins attempted to book his bet; but he was so tipsy he could not make a letter. Smith had sense enough left not to make the attempt.

After a few more glasses, and a jolly attempt at a song, Messrs. Smith and Wiggins reeled off to what they were pleased to call their cribs.

There we will leave them and return to our young friend Gretton Denbury.

"Denbury, my boy, I'm glad to see you," said old Sir Grice, shaking him heartily by the hand. "I hope the nerves are all right? You must shoot well to-morrow, for I have backed your scores against the field; and Lord William is down here."

Gretton assured him that nothing could induce him to try to shoot well more than the notion that he was pitted against Lord William.

Having thus got rid of the old baronet, who was rather apt to hold a guest by the hand too long, Gretton walked up the drawing-room, to where two ladies were seated. They did not rise to greet him, but having shaken him by the hand, made room for him on the sofa between them. By the uncertain but cheerful light of a blazing fire, and one pair of wax candles, a spectator might have seen that Gretton was on a very friendly footing with both the ladies, and on something more than a friendly footing with the younger of the two; for when he had taken his seat he retained the hands that had been placed in his, and even ventured to press them to his lips. The fact was, that Gretton was engaged to Jane Pounceforth, and would have been united to her ere this, but he had a troublesome uncle, an old East Indian officer, who would not die, although he had an *unmusical*, that is, a dis-organ-ised liver, for some years, and had drank enough Cheltenham water to float a seventy-four. Neither would he make his nephew an addition to his allowance, although every friend of the family had urged upon him the cruelty of keeping longer asunder those whom love had long made one. Not he. He had never been married himself, and he thought he was doing his nephew a kindness by keeping him single as long as he could. He said he was sure he would bless him for so doing long before the honey-month was ended.

What passed between the ladies and the gentleman we would not betray if we could. All that passed which has any reference to this little tale was an expression of regret, on Jane's part, that Gretton, who was fond of fair manly sport, should have consented to join in the unsportsmanlike proceedings of the morrow.

"My poor birds!" said Jane. "I used to go down daily to the keeper's to feed them with my own hands when they were little creatures; and even after they were turned out into the covers around, they would come upon the lawn and follow me as if they knew me. They will be shot at among the rest, and either killed, or what is worse, wounded, and creep into the woods and die a miserable lingering death. And then the danger to yourself. Among a party of ten or twelve guns there is sure to be some accident. I wish you would not go with them, but take the dogs and go to some distant cover by yourself; you will have less shooting, perhaps, but better sport, and will not be exposed to the mercies of some bungling shot."

Gretton pressed the hand that rested in his, and assured Jane that he detested the battue as much as she could do, but that he could not avoid joining it, as her father had pitted him to shoot against the whole of the party: he was especially anxious to satisfy

Lord William that there were men in the world who could shoot as well as he could, although he looked upon himself as the crack shot of the country.

Jane had only time to extract a promise from Gretton, that he would be very careful not to place himself in a dangerous spot, or to keep too forward in his zeal for slaughter, before the guests entered the drawing-room, and he was forced to quit her side to pay his respects to sundry M.P.'s and one cabinet minister. The dinner was speedily announced; and when the ladies had quitted the dinner-table, Sir Grice grew loud in his praises of his keepers, who had been so active in the discharge of their duties that they had convicted no less than fifteen most notorious poachers during the past month.

He was sincerely congratulated by his friends on having such very efficient keepers, and highly applauded for keeping up the stock of game in the country, which, as they said, with the preservation of foxes, was the only thing that would induce country gentlemen to reside upon their estates.

Sir Grice cordially agreed with his friends, and begged permission to propose one toast: of course it was granted to him. He filled his glass with claret, and drank to "The preservatives—the benefactors of their country."

"Do you include your tenants in that toast?" asked the cabinet minister, after he had done justice to it in a bumper.

"Oh, decidedly," said Sir Grice. "The fact is, I have laid all my little farms into large ones, so that where I had some twenty men who were worrying my steward to death for compensation for damage done to crops, I have now only four or five; and as they are wealthy, and fond of sporting, they give me very little trouble. I don't allow them to shoot, but I give them a day or two's coursing every season, and they all hunt with the fox-hounds; besides, I only keep just enough rabbits to feed the foxes, and I allow my keepers the remainder for finding themselves in powder and shot."

"Devilish liberal!" said somebody.

"I suppose we shall get some shooting to-morrow," drawled out Lord William.

Sir Grice assured him he had counted upwards of three hundred pheasants at feed, in one small patch of buck-wheat, only a day or two before.

"I am very glad to hear it," said Lord William, "for I was out at ——— Hall the day before yesterday, and worked hard all day, with two other men, to kill one hundred and fifty brace, although we had fellows to load for us."

"Confounded slow work," said the cabinet minister.

"Yes, and all owing to those infernal poachers; and I am sure the farmers encourage them," said Lord William.

A long discussion took place about the Game Laws; and every body agreed that the penalties were not severe enough. Some were for transportation for every offence, and hanging for being out at night, with intent, &c.; and one gentleman went so far as to regret

that the Forest Laws, so prudently made by the Normans, were not still in force. The conversation was then varied by discussing the merits of several new engines which had been invented to supersede man-traps, spring-guns, and dog-spears. Sir Grice was happy to inform the company that he had a very ingenious blacksmith in his village, who could supply them with a species of gin, so small, yet strong in the spring, that if a man trod upon it, it "would cut his foot nearly off just above the ankle, in spite of a stout high-low."

Everybody expressed his intention of giving the clever workman a large order.

Now there was not one of the party present who, on any other subject but game-preserving, was not a most humane man. They were all good landlords, kind masters, and most liberal in their charities to their poor dependants; yet, merely for the sake of keeping up the stock of game, they would not scruple to lay down in their covers an engine that would maim a man for life, or perhaps catch some boy by the leg who ventured into the wood to gather a half-pennyworth of nuts.

"You must look to your shooting to-morrow, my lord," said Sir Grice, "for I have backed Gretton Denbury against you and the field."

"I'll bet Gretton a pony to ——" But Gretton was gone. He had joined Jane and her mother some half hour after they left the room.

A few bets were made and booked; and the whole party left the table to join the ladies. The butler whispered to his master, as he handed him his tea, that the head keeper was in his study, and wished to speak to him on very particular business.

Sir Grice left the room, and was absent for some time. On his return he found his friends engaged at whist or picquet, all with the exception of Gretton Denbury, who was enjoying a quiet chat with his future.

"Nothing the matter, I hope, Sir Grice?" said Gretton.

"I hope not," said the Baronet. "The keeper has been here to tell me that two Londoners, crack shots and fighting men, as he calls them, are come down to-day with their guns on a visit to George Dareall, a vulgar fellow, who has a strip of land running between two of my best preserves, and who does all he can to annoy me, although I have offered him ten times the value of the land to get rid of him. These two fellows, who came down by the steamer to-day, have doubtless been sent for on purpose to destroy every bird and hare that is driven out of cover to-morrow."

"I think I know the men; they were my fellow-passengers — two very vulgar fellows, but not over-courageous. I was obliged to chastise them for their insolence to a poor old seaman's daughter; and they bore their punishment very meekly."

Gretton, of course, had to relate what took place; and was rewarded for his zeal in the service of the fair sex by a kindly look from Jane, and an approving speech from Sir Grice Pounceforth.

Shortly afterwards the ladies retired. Cards having no charms for

Gretton, and being mindful of the bet which was to be decided on the morrow, he "consulted his nerves," and sought his bed.

CHAPTER III.

THE reader must imagine the breakfast; but to aid his imagination, I must hint to him that it was not one of those jolly breakfasts which sportsmen eat when they have a day's fair work before them—a solid meal, with either a glass of good strong ale, or the minutest thimbleful of French cream, to prepare them to support some hours of toil; it was merely a breakfast—prolonged, by the aid of newspapers and letter-reading, until eleven by the clock.

Then, instead of seeing a brace of keepers, with some four or five brace of spaniels, waiting in the lawn, you merely see some eight or nine louts, clad in leathern jerkins and smalls, to resist the thorns, and one poor dog, of a retriever breed, to pick up wounded birds and hares. You see, also, as many gentlemen's servants as there are gentlemen going out, each with *two* double-barrelled guns with him, one of which he is to load as fast as he can, while his master is blazing away as fast as *he* can with the other.

You get to the cover side; and Mr. Head keeper marshals his men, and then marshals you. He places you in a line, and you march down the cover as regularly as if you were going to attack a human foe instead of a lot of poor hares and pheasants, who, having been unmolested all the summer months, look up into your face, as much as to ask you what you can possibly want with them? If it were not for the beaters and their poles, they would let you pass them without even attempting to fly or run away from you! However, they find what you want,—whiz—whirr—tit-up—bang—bang—bang; some twelve or fourteen are kicking, struggling, and panting on the ground; and an impudent under-keeper, with a hazel wand in his hand, quietly notches down what each gentleman claims to have killed.

The upper keeper calls a halt, asks, "All ready?" and at the answer "All," cries "Forward;" on you go again, and so on to the end of the day. Baugh! is it not enough to make the real sportsman, who goes out with his dogs, and enjoys hunting, for finding his game, and killing it fairly, emetically disposed?

We will leave Lord William, Gretton Denbury, the cabinet minister, and all the party, firing and scoring as hard as they possibly can, and Sir Grice Pounceforth looking on and congratulating himself upon the respectable show he shall make in the county paper when "the total" of three or four days' shooting in his well-stocked preserves shall appear chronicled in its columns.

Reader, just come here. Do you see that long narrow field which runs between those two fine oak-covers? it is not above five acres in length, and about two in breadth. It was a piece of barley, and it was not mown. The ears were merely cut off and carried home, and they scarcely paid the expense of cartage. The stubble is left long on

good strong beer, and at
At their sides, and not v
and George's "man." I
cart in which the lunche
been killed. As soon as
"how many?"

"Two-and-twenty brace
of partridges, and two woe

"Cart them home, and
master. "I can hear by
go into the smaller wood; I
must come back again."

Away goes the man; an
their luncheon the servant
washing out the barrels of t
large in the bore, and capal
shot in each barrel. "Reg
Smith pronounced them.

Luncheon being finished,
produced, and the three lig
brandy-and-water, calmly li
away."

"They must have had go
"for they shoot every mom

"As to sport," said Geor
birds are as thick as they
barley as domestic poultry
that young chaps."

These words induced the two Londoners to drink and smoke more fiercely. They also induced a man who had been watching their proceedings, himself unseen, to hurry across a field leading to the upper end of the cover, and tell the head keeper all he had seen and heard.

"Hold hard," cried the head keeper; and having informed his party of the news which he had just heard, it was resolved that Lord William and Gretton Denbury, the two best shots, and who had just shot *ties*, should go forward, and so frustrate the sport of Dareall and his friends by shooting at the game as it tried to slip out of one cover into the other.

Lord William went down one side of the cover, and Gretton on the other, each accompanied by his servant. When they arrived at the bottom of it they entered it, and took their stations in a drive which commanded the whole breadth of it. Down came birds and hares as thick and fast as flocks of turkeys and sheep; and when they saw their enemies before them, the poor birds, instead of running down the bank and slipping along the ditches, as they would have done had they not been intercepted, rose and gave themselves up as fair shots to those posted ready for them.

Lord William and Gretton fired as fast as a loaded gun could be placed in their hands, and an under-keeper kept on scoring each man's birds as they fell from the guns. All this time George Dareall and his friends were not idle. They understood, the moment they heard the first shot fired at the bottom of the cover, that some guns had been placed there to spoil their sport. They, therefore, deeming such conduct on the part of Sir Grice very ungentelemanly, fired away as hard as they could.

Now it so happened, after the main of the game had passed down the cover, and the beaters were heard approaching, that a fine cock pheasant rose immediately behind Gretton Denbury, and flew straight up over his head: he put up his gun, and just as it topped the trees pulled at it. The bird flew on as if unhurt, and Lord William called out "a dead miss."

"A dead bird, you mean," said Gretton; "he is hit up the back, and will tower."

"Five to one he does not," said Lord William.

"Done—let us get out of cover and see," said Gretton.

They both rushed to the same gap, and sprang over the fence and ditch.

"There—see—there—look—I told you so—he is whirling round and round, and will soon fall—there, down he comes close to our feet," said Gretton; and as he said so it was, the pheasant fell dead within a few yards of them.

Gretton stepped forward to pick it up, but a voice called out, "Leave that bird alone, and be off my land."

The two gentlemen looked round, and saw George Dareall, and Smith and Wiggins, close upon them. It was quite evident that the two latter were tipsy, or nearly so. Lord William lifted his hat, and begged Mr. Dareall's pardon for having set foot on his land, but *alleged the bet that he had made as an excuse*. Gretton did the same,

and George seemed willing to say no more about it, and let them return to the cover; but Jim Smith and Tom Wiggins called him a sneaking fellow, and swore that if they were in his place they would not let two proud fellows trespass there for nothing, but would take their guns away from them."

"No, no," said George; "it was only to decide a bet. They seem to be civil chaps enough. Keep quiet, do."

"Civil!" why that is the haughty fellow who struck us both yesterday, — him," said Smith.

"Ay, and richly you deserved it," said Gretton. "But come away, my lord, we shall not derive either pleasure or profit by holding a parley with such men as these."

"Who do you call men?" said Wiggins, walking up to him,—"not yourself and your noble friend there, I hope. Lay down your guns and we will fight you fairly."

Lord William smiled, and turned away; Gretton was about to do the same, when Wiggins struck him on the arm with the barrels of his gun. Gretton dropped his own gun, and seized hold of Wiggins's by the muzzle: he had only time to say, "What do you mean?" when the trigger was touched by some means, the gun went off, and the charge was lodged in the heart of Gretton Denbury.

So ended the Battue.

Sir Grice Pounceforth, at his daughter's request, had all his game destroyed; and George Dareall sent the narrow strip of land lying between two well-stocked covers into the market, but could not find a purchaser. The spot was *tabooed*.



"THEIR TAMENESS IS SHOCKING TO ME!"

THE DEATH-SEER.

A GHOST STORY FOR CHRISTMAS.

BY THE MOUNTAINEER.

CHAPTER I.

MICHAEL TAUNDORF was a clock-maker and a scientific mechanician. His leisure hours he passed in the ardent pursuit of chemistry, upon a perfect intimacy with which, according to his opinion, all true knowledge might be said to depend. His activity displayed itself most where investigation promised to reveal a link of affinity with universal nature. He regarded the physical sciences in their range as the highest object of the human understanding, the worthiest of inquiry and cultivation; and he never ceased regretting that his situation in life hindered him from devoting himself exclusively to their study. Over his early life the veil of obscurity was drawn. He was not well pleased if conversation reverted to it, and he himself at all times maintained an obstinate silence upon the subject of his youth. To the naturally suspicious here was reason enough for drawing the most extravagant conclusions respecting his birth and origin; to those addicted to sentiment and romance nothing was so natural to occur as the idea of his being the illegitimate offspring of a prince and some poor outcast girl. Taundorf showed himself perfectly indifferent to all conjectures; as in fact he generally, and in every way, smiled at and scorned the opinions of the multitude. Curiosity and inquisitioners with all their exertions could at last obtain only such information as the following:—Taundorf had been a pupil at a first-rate school, and had evinced the greatest zeal in the acquisition of knowledge. Unforeseen misfortunes compelled him, at a later period, to choose an humbler way of life than that which he had originally proposed to himself, and he selected the craft of a clock-maker, because, as he affirmed, it gave him the opportunity to investigate in miniature the mechanism of the powers of the universe.

Taundorf was a tall stout man, with surprisingly vivacious and intelligent dark blue eyes. If gloominess at all attached to them, it was by reason of the heavy bushy brow which, silver-grey in hue, hung over them. He did not approve himself very choice in his attire—the simplest garments were with him the best. He followed custom: at least he swerved from it only in the one article of boots. Instead of using those peculiar to the place, he wore a species of jack-boot, made of soft curried buck skin, and reaching almost to his loins. As he often wandered abroad through wood and brake, col-

lecting plants for his chemical researches, this flexible covering was likely enough to be of service to him; but Taundorf loved to be mysterious, and when he was questioned touching this whim, his solemn and obscure replies at once betrayed him for a Bohemian borderer. He was a widower—the father of a lovely daughter whom he brought up with great solicitude. It was generally supposed from his decided aversion to all received usages and opinions in the matter of religion, that he would never send his child to school. But the people were mistaken, as they are very often when they officiously decide for others. Taundorf sent his little Anna to school a year sooner than the time prescribed by the law, and he rejoiced unfeignedly when he found the gifted creature making rapid progress in her learning.

Although he never went to church himself, and therefore never approached the altar, yet he never forbade his child from joining in any Christian rite. On the contrary, he requested her to give a deep attention to the mysteries which she was taught; and never did she return from visiting the house of prayer without a serious questioning. She must relate all that she had heard, how she felt herself affected by the prayer and sermon, and what her views were generally in respect of the prescribed religion and the church of which she was a member. The father listened to every answer with a vigilant attention, loved his daughter for her knowledge and belief, and did not suffer himself by an equivocal smile, or an unguarded look, or an involuntary motion of the muscles, to betray, in the slightest manner, the diametrically opposite convictions which existed in himself. This unusual toleration gave little satisfaction to the many. Comments were made upon the artfulness of his hypocrisy; and his intimate acquaintance with the Arch Enemy himself, at least with all imaginable evil genii, was unhesitatingly inferred. His fondness for tradition and legendary lore here stood him in little service. "There you have it!" said one. "We honest folks only amuse ourselves with such old wives' tales in the gloaming. This man meddles with them eternally, and loves them better than his prayers. He can't live without them; and, what is more, he can't escape of himself out of the claws of the devil, and that's why he is trying by force to make an angel of his daughter, so that she may intercede for him on the judgment day. There is no doubt about it!"

In like manner, his mechanical skill was ascribed to help received from infernal powers. Taundorf had constructed a clock which went full eight days before it had to be wound up again. Its dial, in addition to hour, minute, and second hands, contained a perfect planetary system, in excellent working order, and corresponding to a nicety with the information of the calendar,—that mine of wisdom of Bohemian borderers,—that house and heart's companion of every honest peasant! This clock was so admirably devised, that it never, by any chance, varied from the true time,—a fact in itself sufficient to prove its maker under the protection and assistance of supernatural agencies. Fame is certain to accomplish one thing. It will bring the needy to your doors: and it brought, accordingly, from all parts and from a great distance supplicants to the threshold of the gentle Taundorf. His

bearing towards all men was courteous, frank, and mild. Those who saw him once came gladly a second and a third time ; and many whom he invited to his fireside of an evening did not hesitate to put a liberal, if not extravagant, construction upon his bidding. He was lively, cheerful, and very sociable. If he found a willing and intelligent listener, he would spend hours in affording him a profound insight into many of the laws of mechanics, in explaining the easily comprehended points in the theory of astronomy, and, if he chanced to be in a particularly happy vein, in performing many curious chemical experiments. His extensive intercourse with men did not entice him into forming many friendships. In this regard, too, the opinions of Taundorf were at variance with those of the world. He asserted that a generous intercourse with men stipulates merely for reciprocal benevolence, and was a common duty. Friendship, on the other hand, could exist only between two agreeing in their elementary points of character. Associated with the peculiarities already mentioned, Taundorf possessed a moral strength of will enabling him always to follow out or to eschew just what he affirmed in conversation for law or prohibition. He possessed withal one true and only friend. To him Taundorf disclosed his whole heart—revealed his weaknesses; but, on that account, he did not the less bind the man he had chosen fast to his confiding soul.

Is it or is it not a matter of surprise, that the chosen friend of Taundorf was his living, personified opposite? There are theories current which will establish either proposition. Braunholz adhered in all things, whether religious or political, to what was taught ; to what had been determined and legally defined for him. Reform, change, and revolution were so many mortal abominations. He could not see the necessity, the virtue, the justice of any innovation whatever. He was a rigid old Lutheran protestant, and with a scrupulousness, extending to the minutest points, he conformed to every ecclesiastical ceremony ; so also did he act in matters of state. The authorities, in his opinion, had the inviolable right to command, simply because they were authorities, and whosoever resisted them he regarded less as a malefactor than as an individual labouring under some unhappy delusion. When urged in an argument, but not till then, Braunholz would acknowledge that opposition might be considered lawful against glaring tyranny and atrocious arbitrariness, as, in reference to religion, he had no objection to take arms against canting puritanism and heretical dissents.

With this man Taundorf usually passed his evenings, apparently in ceaseless dissension, but really in most intimate amity. The difference in their views necessarily kept the conversation in an uninterrupted flow, and since neither of them was wanting in original thoughts, controversy seldom ran upon insignificant topics. They would often argue until they were tired, and finish, as they supposed, with shaking hands, when Taundorf suddenly would plunge into his favourite subject of mechanics, or attach to an observation, gathered from natural science, a series of new ideas, suggestive of reflection,

and leading to the understanding of many phenomena, neglected by the vulgar, or regarded by the more learned as impenetrable secrets.

One evening, Braunholz found his strange friend at the melting furnace, employed in fusing a small piece of ore. The matter-of-fact man watched the philosopher for a moment in silence, and then quietly asked him what metal he hoped to obtain by his process. Taundorf put the crucible on one side, extinguished his fire, and answered:—

“None—as thou seest, for none can be derived from it.”

Braunholz looked hard at his friend, and fancied that he could trace in his countenance an expression of discomposure—the ruffled evidence of disappointed hope.

“What, would you revive the anxieties and distresses of our old alchemists?” said Braunholz. “Can you hope at this day to discover a new regulus of metal? Would you, like them, be made the mere fool of your overstrained expectations? I pray you, Taundorf, leave smelting and decomposing: in these days measure and build rather. It is in small things as in great, fight against your conviction as you will. The *Destroyer* shall have his ruins and a view of a glorious field of nettles. The *Preserver* plucks fruits and eats them.”

“Let us leave this for the present, worthy Hans,” returned Taundorf, seating himself upon his leathern chair. “No earthly business interests me longer than it tickles me. There is no foundation here upon which to build, and as you know, this is no hobby-horse of mine. Guess what happened to me yesterday!”

“You went into the country, as I heard from Anna, and could not have reached home before nightfall. You didn’t surely dance a roundelay with the fairies?” added Hans, with suppressed laughter.

Taundorf fixed his keen eye upon his friend, and remained silent until his risibility had vanished. He then spoke.

“I remember to have heard from you, Braunholz, that, as a boy, you once beheld that singular phenomenon which the people call *money-burning*.

“Capital!” exclaimed Braunholz, slapping his knees with his broad hand, and now laughing outright. “You have seen it, haven’t you? I thought so. What is there in this way that you don’t see, or fancy you see?”

Taundorf betrayed no vexation at the pleasantry of his friend, but proceeded:—

“I had been to Kreibitz, and my way homewards was by Haida. There I was detained longer than I expected, and night overtook me as I quitted Bohemia, and crossed the high hill at Schalkstein. The night, however, was very clear, and, for the time of the year, sufficiently warm. I prefer, as you know, the night to the day for travelling. You meet no talkers—you are left to yourself and your own mind, and when Nature herself is silent, you may watch her closely at her working and creating. I broke intentionally by cross ways through the woody grounds, and—so to speak—over stock and stone. The direction I took was towards the marsh and boggy land near the Pocheberg—for I hoped to find many *ignes fatui* there.

The perfectly still air, the star-bright Heaven, and the atmosphere heavily charged with electricity, all promised me an enchanting spectacle—nor was I disappointed. Whilst still in the wood, I perceived a glimmering in the valley, and when I ascended the Pocheberg, there appeared a whole troop of will-o'-the-wisps capering about under the withered rushes. The merry creatures looked strange enough with their grey vapoury coats and luminous tippets, which they permitted, really quite coquettishly, to fly asunder, that they might draw them close about their shoulders again, for all the world like sprightly girls who have been somewhat heated and overdone in the dance. The joyful band amused me immeasurably. I crept as softly as an Indian through moss and rushes, laid myself on my back, and suffered the beaming turrets, bubbles, bottles, riders, and hoop-petticoated little fools to dance away over me that I might learn as much as possible of their nature and properties. At length, having sufficiently gratified my curiosity, just as a fresh concourse was tumbling over me I burst into ungovernable laughter, blew with full cheeks into the reeling swarm, and was really almost choked with merriment, as I saw the ærial wonders striving and stumbling one against another. Many became immediately extinct; others flew with a hissing murmur far into the meadows, and concealed themselves beneath the silvery veil of mist in which the night had already enwrapped them. It was so perfectly tranquil that the slightest sound was audible at a considerable distance. I proceeded on my road, skirting the wood, towards Breitenberg. All of a sudden, on my left, at the distance perhaps of two hundred steps, there flashed a dazzling light before my eyes. I stood still, and watched the flame which issued apparently from the earth, and streamed tolerably high up into the air, now dazzling white, then ruddy yellow, and at times trimmed with bluish stripes, and graceful windings. I was allured to the spot. I ran across two fields and reached a small crystal spring, in which the reflection of the flame, which burned close by, was playing. I was acquainted with the well. It is called the Boggle Spring, and it has this peculiar property—it never freezes over. At its very brink, from a few basaltic stones, the flame rose—there was no crackling sound; it gave out no particular heat. 'Now!' thought I, silently watching this singular earthly light, 'here burns money!' And without reflecting more, but trusting in the tradition, I threw my fire-steel into the blaze, made three crosses over it, and exclaimed, — 'As to thee, so thou to me!' In an instant lustre and fire vanished. I saw and heard nothing but the murmuring of the spring and the whispering lapping of a few lizards. I then, with all my might, struck my staff into the earth, and went unmolested homewards. The night was already far advanced when I passed by your barn. At the house of our friend Dahlmann — mark me well — I was detained by a bright glistening, such as the moon is apt to shed upon a casement upon which it falls. A closer observation enabled me to recognize, as plainly as I now see you, a child of five years old, or thereabouts, running with all its speed along the house, dressed in a snow-white garment, and making, with its

little hands, a sign towards the chamber window, as if, indeed, throwing kisses to some one there. I called aloud; and the creature turned towards me. The little robe flew asunder, and I beheld the bodily skeleton of a child. It stood still, and stared upon me—pointed with its bony finger to the window, and then by degrees dissolved into the air."

Taundorf stopped, as if he waited for an observation from the listening Hans.

"And what of this?" asked Braunholz.

"What, Hans? I tell thee what. Neighbour Dahlmann's little beauty must look well to it. Within a month from this the tale will be told. Before four weeks are counted, she is dead and buried. I tell you so—I, who have seen Death!"

"Dear me! dear me!" exclaimed Hans. "How is it possible that so wise a head as yours can take such palpable nonsense for pure truth, and can think of building up a faith that is to outlast and excel the thousand-year-old doctrines of the soundest and the simplest reason?"

Taundorf sighed, but did not answer.

"And so the time has come at last!" continued Hans, "and I have lived to see it, when your prophecy is to be considered no longer a capital joke. You have really met with our old friend Death. Very wonderful indeed! And in company with a lovely child in its night-gown! Most wonderful! And poor Frederica must die, at latest, in four weeks. It is too good not to be laughed at. Tell me, Taundorf, does your Death dance the ordinary waltz or the new gallopade? Mind you are very particular next time, and give me exact information; for I shall certainly enter this marvellous history, as in duty bound, upon our parish records."

Braunholz would have persisted in this tone of sportive raillery, mixed, as it was, with a slight tincture of sorrowfulness which he could not suppress, had not Taundorf at length interrupted him.

"Enough!" said the watchmaker. "Chop logic against me, as you will. Sharpen every word into a three-edged dagger, and strike with it to the heart of my faith, to the innermost life of the arguments which I set up for it. Make war against the mechanism of my ideal world, by every means that dialectics authorise; but I warn you, nourish not in your bosom the sleek snake, mockery, nor venture to incite it against me. You may silence me by such a course, but take no one effectual move towards my conversion."

"Good!" said Hans. "Then, in the first place, I tell you it is a riddle to me, and defies all solution, that a man like you, so thoroughly a freethinker in all religious matters, who regard faith as only a curb for the vulgar, should seek in a thick and troubled sphere for that enlightenment which he will not look for in the luminous simplicity of a revealed creed!"

"Discriminate, dear Hans," replied Taundorf, with softness and equanimity; "you say I am incredulous, and I will not contradict you. You accuse me, at times, of being an atheist, and a despiser of religion. This reproach, however, hits me not; for if I do not hold

for absolute truth all that the multitude consider truth, still by my silent doubt is no one injured, and I am not fool enough to disdain the proffered good because I cannot make it my own. Here is the question! Do I lack what is offered, or have I it already? If the former be the case, then is it advisable—nay, it may be my duty, gratefully to accept the gift. If the latter, I cannot worship two creators in one temple. I place no value upon set forms, because I cannot value the kernel after the outward shell. Look, Hans—here are two watches; this is heavy and ugly, and made of pinchbeck: the other, as you see, is enclosed within an exquisitely worked case of the purest gold, and no one will venture to deny that it is a work of art; and yet, I assure you, this gold-enveloped watch will not tell truer time than yon thick pinchbeck. Well then, what if my belief, inserted in a pinchbeck cover, is more commodious to me, more suitable to my nature than the faith of yourself and of millions of other Christians preserved in an artful and well-chiselled golden case! Am I, on that account, less an honest and a good man? My rough trousers, my boots of curried buck-skin, are neither fashionable nor captivating in appearance, but the clothing suits me, and answers my purpose better than that in which the world delights.”

“Still, Taundorf,” replied Hans, “you give no answer to my riddle. You will not find it easy to prove your own consistency, much less the truth of this sapient ghost-seeing. Prove to me the reasonableness of your belief in such goblin visions, and rest assured I will listen to you seriously. In the meanwhile, it does but irritate me to find a man like Taundorf sharing in the weakness of our most ignorant boors. Enough of it. You told me that you struck your stick into the ground when you saw the *money burning*. What became of that adventure?”

“Of that anon!” said the clockmaker. “You are unwilling to believe that there exist in the world forebodings of death, that make themselves, when needful, visible to man. It is, in truth, a dark, yea an awful ground, and the heart beats quickly when we tread upon it. Yet the harmony between different souls meeting in life, either in person, or by a brotherly affinity of thought, is delicate, refined, intense; and may not a sudden change occurring in the one occasion reaction in the other? If so, it will never be the lot of the cold and naked understanding to discover the cause of this mysterious union of two distinct and separated souls. A spiritual gift, like that of prophecy, must penetrate the secret. But do not deny the existence of a power, because you cannot comprehend it. As rationally may you try to laugh away the influence of the atmosphere upon the barometer, or twenty like phenomena capable of being traced to their principles, and yet enveloped in a cloud of mystery. Mechanics are marvellous to the uninitiated, and excite in him a feeling that wavers between admiration and fear. Does not the power of one steel spring, which, in its effort to expand, sets a whole machinery in motion, fill him with astonishment and chilly awe? And is not the very unravelling of the mystery more painful to him than the mystery itself? Yes, and it must be—for you make manifest to him a faculty of dead

nature, and which, when confronted with life, must always retain something of the ghostly. You remember old Fallmer, an exemplary man in all respects, with a healthy downright sobriety of character, that had nothing in common with the world of ghosts. Yet did not he believe, with unshaken confidence, in the so-called *deathlight*, and did he not see it, he and ten others, upon the very eve of his wife's dissolution? Before his own death, the same vision was repeated; and, when the family books were searched, there was found the declaration, that for two hundred years such lights had invariably preceded the entrance of death into that singular abode. Let your disbeliever smile; nothing is easier than a laugh. Let him gainsay the evidence of experience if he can. Whatever has happened, let it have been in a hut, has an historical worth, and a claim upon our respect and attention."

"Sure," said Hans, seriously. "Deathlights are strange things. In this very place alone twelve families at least are visited by this singular apparition. Others, too, suffer what they call the '*Death-fall*;' a fearful shock that shakes the house to its foundation, and fills every nerve with horror. Certainly no natural cause has been discovered for this fearful noise."

"You see!" said Taundorf. "And these are but a few of a thousand well-attested apparitions. Have we not the screech-owl fluttering around the dwelling, or soaring even through the chamber? Observe, however, that all these different notifications of a coming death occur only to those related by the tie of blood, or the more intimate tie of spiritual sympathy. It is a psychological riddle as strange as the often-repeated phenomenon of two persons meeting for the first time, and feeling themselves by magic power chained to one another, or from one another irresistibly repulsed. Thus you have born friends and foes. The secret of friendship, of the all-sacrificing fervour and the all-tormenting pangs of love, rests upon this unfathomable natural magic, and will be divulged in good time either here or hereafter."

"There is a great deal in what you say," answered Hans, more serious than ever. "I can't deny it. I would give you the lie if I could, for I confess I shudder more than I can laugh at your solemn perseverance in what I hold after all to be a delusion."

"Your timid nature is at fault," continued the seer, smiling. "Why should you be so alarmed? I am not disturbed. Let the form re-appear as soon as it will — what of it? We must accustom ourselves to the sight, Hans Braunholz, sooner or later. I shall be neither more gay nor sadder for another meeting. My blood will circulate as freely as on any other working day. Let the deathform make known to me my own approaching end, and then, I grant you, it is likely enough that one slight fleshly shudder may creep through my marrow, in spite of me. At least," said the speaker, sighing heavily, "I saw my father quiver when the solemn shadow, for the first time, followed him."

"You are a wonderfully-gifted man, Taundorf," said Braunholz. "I know not what to think of you. Would that you went to church — for granted all you say to be true, your spectre could not

withstand the holy sacrament and a clear conscience. I fear for you, old friend. You have a gentle spirit, a rare heart, — but how will these help you on your death-bed? How can they help any man who wilfully rejects every revelation of Christianity, and fixes his faith on witchcraft, goblins' work, and ghost seeings? Heaven knows, Taundorf, I am thinking about you for ever. Do me a favour now. At least reform a little; at all events go to church, so that the people may cease saying all kinds of cruel things about you."

"Sweet simplicity!" exclaimed Taundorf, laughing aloud, and at the same time rising from his chair and walking up and down the room. "What! worthy Hans, do you suppose that the opinion of these honest but feeble folk can affect me in the slightest way? He who doesn't esteem me, fears me; he who fears me keeps from my threshold, and so I am safe from unbidden guests. Fye, Hans! Christianity, Hans! Regular church-going, Hans! Pattern of orthodoxy, according to the line and level! Would you have me play the hypocrite, that I may throw dust into the eyes of your weak-headed followers? No, good friend, my fellow-creatures shall see me as I show myself to my Maker, without a veil, without a mask—as one who examines, explores, thinks, doubts; ay, and likewise *believes*. Hans, Hans, think of the pinchbeck watch!"

Taundorf opened the side wing of the casement, and gazed out upon the landscape, upon which the night lay silently and solemnly. The barking of dogs fell shrilly on the deep tranquillity, and at measured intervals the monotonous strokes of the miner's clock that spoke from the neighbouring colliery.

"Oh, these are nights to love!" said Taundorf, advancing to his friend, who was at the lathe, trying the elasticity of a pair of watchsprings. "Few dream how much is to be seen and learnt by night! But he who would appreciate Nature must seek for himself, and seek her in her thousand lurking places—upon mountain and rock, in the valleys and in the woods, on deserts and heaths. Original and healthy thought is impossible without an insight into the weaving and ordering of Nature. It is the exterior garb of the Almighty, and without a patient and a holy contemplation man is less than human. To me she breathes forth earthly happiness, and I compare with it the happiness of Heaven, the joys of a spiritual existence. You call me a dreamer, and indeed—but, for the love of Heaven, look," cried the strange man, suddenly, "look, Hans, look, be satisfied, and disbelieve no longer." The large bright blue eye of the death-seer sparkled like a star beneath his overhanging brow. "There," he continued, "there he is again, as he appeared last night—poor, poor child, it will be speedy work for thee."

Hans rushed to the window, and looked hard towards the spot to which the hand of the seer pointed. But he could discern nothing. Every thing was enveloped in a thin transparent mist, through which resounded the miner's bell, the howling of the dogs, and the rushing noise of a weir.

"As I am a living sinner!" exclaimed Braunholz, "I grow quite miserable in your society; and much as I wish to hear the end of

your adventure touching the *Money-burning* at the Boggle Spring, I must defer that pleasure to a more comfortable time. Taundorf, I am ashamed to tell you that I dread to walk home."

"Stay with me, then," said the clockmaker; "you must content yourself with humble—ha! now it vanishes—for my housekeeping is simple; and, as far as comforts are concerned, I believe they are at least equal to those of our forefathers."

"Thank you, thank you," said Braunholz, moving off. "I'll say a prayer or two to give me heart, and scare away all spectres. God bless you, friend! Good night."

"Folly of follies!" exclaimed Taundorf as his visiter departed. "Here has this man given me a lecture upon my conceits, and, lo! superstition springs like a kitten to his own shoulder, and purrs and caresses him to my heart's content. Poor honest Hans!"

He kept his eyes upon the retreating form of Braunholz until it vanished in the evening mist, which had now taken possession of the surrounding hills. Taundorf then revisited the melting furnace, and spent some hours in analysing and decomposing various ores. Before he retired to rest, he carefully wound up the pinchbeck watch. An involuntary smile passed over him, as the case rested in his hand.

"Strange!" said he to himself. "There surely lies a charm in the antiquated thing. Why is it always the first to come to hand when I care not which watch I carry to my bed. We cannot be separated. Is it merely habit?"

There was one thing more to do before reposing. A visit to his child was the last business of the day. Anna lay in deep sleep. Her father stood before her bed, and watched her peaceful slumber. Her hands were folded across her bosom, and it seemed that whilst praying her senses had been steeped in sweet oblivion.

"*And is this, too, merely habit?*" exclaimed the doting father, in a whisper. He repeated the words in the same hushed voice, and his face was bathed in tears—wherefore shed I know not—ere he trod, reluctantly and noiselessly, to his own apartment.

CHAPTER II.

A VERY few days passed before the friends were again together. Hans, eager to learn the upshot of the *Money-burning*, did not fail to bring the conversation, as speedily as he could, to that subject. The friends were sitting in Taundorf's workshop, where the settlings of some fused stones were lying about.

"I am almost ashamed," said the clockmaker, "to say one word concerning it, for the experiment, as might be foreseen, ended in nothing. Upon the morning following that marvellous night, I visited the Boggle Spring, and found my staff unhurt, sticking in the ground, but there was no trace of the fire-steel which I had cast into the flames. The ground about the well was cracked and sprung, as though the long summer heat had forced the soil asunder. Crumbled basalt lay there in abundance; and, on a closer search, I discovered vitrifi-

cations and deposits, but no proper minerals. I had expected something of the kind, for there can be no doubt that the neighbourhood is volcanic. I am not sure, however, whether the perceptible flames proceed from outpouring naphtha, or whether they stream from a more considerable depth, and are the flames of a subterranean fire. These settlings favour the last supposition, but the nature of the fire itself, that diaphanous, noiseless flashing, yielding to the faintest breath of air, almost inclines me to the first opinion."

"I confess you make me happy, Taundorf," answered Braunholz; "for I am now convinced that this mysterious *money-burning* is nothing more than a foolish fancy of the people, and I trust you will take a lesson from your own discovery. If this is a mere fable, why then other traditions and other superstitions that take a deeper root in the mind—for instance, the death——"

"Hush!" exclaimed Taundorf, seizing the wrist of his friend, so that the latter held his tongue immediately. "Do not throw all things one upon another like a child at play. Who ever supposed that in places where such naphtha flames appear it might be possible to raise up *tons* of gold? I have believed, and I still believe, that in such places veins of metal are concealed, and it is very likely that they have appeared ere this upon the surface, putting the ignorant in possession of that rich silver ore which has given to the fire its most expressive name. As for my ability to see that solemn apparition, you can pronounce no judgment in the case. You see nothing, and you therefore are incredulous. It is reasonable enough. Were I like you, I might be incredulous too; but I should hesitate ere I was bold enough to deny the fact."

Anna had prepared a frugal supper for her father and his friend. She appeared with it, and further discussion was postponed to a more fitting season. Hans mentioned a northern light which had lately been discerned, and had filled many persons with great alarm.

"And I don't wonder at it," said Braunholz. "These natural phenomena happen so seldom, that we cannot accustom ourselves to them; and it is a curious fact, I believe, that after the appearance of such northern lights events of weighty importance have really followed. I remember a brilliant northern light appearing shortly before Napoleon's great expedition to Russia, in which four of my brothers were concerned. Superstitious people said it was the sign of frightful bloodshed—that was certainly a safe guess—and without the northern light I had great reason to fear for my brothers. My fears however fell short of the result. My brothers, every one of them, died upon the fields of snow between Smolensk and Beresina; brave lads all, who merited a better fate. Had I been a death-seer, like you, by Saint Michael, the agony of seeing so many walking spectres would have killed me!"

A loud knocking was heard on the closed window-shutter.

"What was that?" said Taundorf, rising.

"Nothing, father!" exclaimed Anna. "It is only the wind beating the rusty iron against the wood!" Notwithstanding this assurance, the knocking continued, and grew louder and more vehement. At

length a voice, trembling with anguish, implored the clockmaker to grant a friend immediate entrance.

"It is our neighbour, as I live!" cried Taundorf, throwing both window and shutter open. "Oh, Heavenly Father!" he continued; "look there, look there! The bony head is watching at the window!"

"Neighbour Taundorf," exclaimed the man, who stood outside full of alarm and terror, "help me, help me! You have remedies for every thing! My child, my poor little Frederica, is dangerously ill! Come with me and see her. You are skilful and wise, and may recommend something that may revive her. She lies insensible!"

"Poor unhappy man!" replied the seer. "I can do nothing for you. She is ill, and she must die!"

Dahlmann groaned heavily, pressed his hands to his eyes, and then wept aloud and piteously.

"Dahlmann!" proceeded Taundorf, taking the miserable father by the hand. "You know how I am cursed. You know what unhappy gift Heaven in its wisdom has thought fit to confer upon me. What I behold this moment assures me that no human aid can save your darling."

"For Heaven's sake, neighbour, what do you see?" asked Dahlmann wildly.

"An apparition," replied the other. "A child, white as the fresh fallen snow, clambers down the gable end of your house, and looks through the window of the apartment in which your Frederica lies. It will not long be satisfied with gazing there: to-morrow it forces itself into the doomed chamber, and the spirit of your child will be released. Take comfort, and pray for strength to bear your trials patiently. I behold death, and cannot help you!"

Dahlmann did not wait to hear more. He ran like a madman from the spot. Anna, with hope to be of some assistance to the child, followed him. Taundorf stood at the window until, according to his statement, the apparition melted. Braunholz paced the room in anger and perturbation.

"Cruel, cruel!" exclaimed the latter, repeating the words over and over again, loud enough for Taundorf to hear. "Ferocious savage! to cut away every hope from the heart of a distracted father. And besides," he continued, "you may be after all deceived; and, if so, how can you forgive yourself for this unnecessary torture?"

"I am not deceived!" said Taundorf. "Dahlmann knows me, and will not misunderstand me. To give hope when all is already lost and gone, is cowardly. The smart is sudden and acute; but it will not fall deep nor eat away his heart."

Anna returned. The child had become worse during the father's absence. She was evidently sinking. Braunholz shrugged his shoulders, and pretending that he had business to attend to, took a sudden leave of the family. Taundorf sighed as his friend quitted him with gloom and displeasure on his brow, and then turned to his daughter, whom he pressed affectionately to his bosom.

"Heaven be thanked!" said he, "that this unholy gift has not

descended to thee, my child. Thy father will henceforward be sought not in love, but in fear and dread. Men will shrink from him as they would from the leper. Only the condemned shall seek him; nor would they cross his path unless in desperation, and in the hope of a reversal of the inevitable doom. Good night, my love! May angels guard thy bed!" Anna left her father unusually excited. For herself, she could not sleep. During the long night she heard her father restlessly pacing his room, and often speaking aloud. Taundorf watched the whole night through, and with the dawn of day he received the intelligence that towards morning the daughter of his neighbour had taken her heavenward flight.

"I knew the hour!" said the seer. "Heaven grant her soul a peaceful resting-place!"

Contrary to expectation, Taundorf took part in the funeral solemnities. The church, however, he did not enter. When asked the reason of his staying away, he gave his usual answer, "What should I do there?"

"What indeed?" muttered an old woman, overhearing his reply. "The devil is much too cunning to think of it. The air of a church has often converted a sinner before now, and the wicked one will not give a chance away!"

So striking a proof of the gift of seeing upon the part of Taundorf could not be heard of without leaving a deep impression upon the minds of men. As it has been said, the fame of Taundorf as a skilful and scientific man had long been acknowledged; and folks had listened with wonder and delight to what was unintelligible and new to them. That he was a prophet and connected with supernatural agencies had never been dreamt of. The seer was mistaken when he thought the world would avoid him on account of his new acquirement. So far from this, crowds from far and near flocked to his abode expecting miracles. For miles round he obtained the surname of "*the wise*," and he was applied to on almost every matter that concerned the happiness and the well-being of the people. In vain did he resist and retreat from the general admiration. Popularity did not suffer him to escape. He must listen to appeals and answer them as well as he could. In truth, the watchmaker did very little. He always imparted well-meaning counsel — such, indeed, as any sound understanding would suggest; and it was pronounced perfectly wonderful, both in itself and in its ultimate effects. As for his death-seeing faculty, it was publicly stated that he could see at once in a man's face whether he was to live or to die, and prophesy to the very minute the period of his dissolution. There was in the latter statement, alas! even more truth than the historian could desire. As time ran on, the seeing-gift of Taundorf manifested itself powerfully in the cure of many persons who had come to the seer for advice. It is, however, but justice to him to state, that he never proffered his advice, and that his constant aim and endeavour was to keep himself free from annoying visits, and to avoid as much as possible all display and noise.

Years passed away. Taundorf still rambled as frequently as ever

over wood and mountain, in constant communion with Nature, and he was still a cheerful, modest, and gentle-hearted companion. All at once a remarkable change came over the powerful and vigorous man. In the course of a few days there took place a total transformation of his features. His vivacity left him; his buoyancy had fled. Contrary to his custom, he was heard to sigh deeply and heavily; and when he quitted his house, the joyful assurance which had always accompanied him, was no longer to be read in his look and gait.

To questions gently and kindly put to him Taundorf answered only with painful smiles, which suggested all manner of interpretation. His silence convicted him. It was reported that the devil was coming for his rights; that the compact was at an end; and that nothing now could be done for him.

Such assertions reached the ear of the still faithful and devoted Braunholz. They grieved him to the heart, and yet he could not confute them. The rapid change in his friend had not escaped him, and yet he had refrained from urging the sufferer to a confession of his grievance, knowing how little could be done by officious importunity. It was not until the most absurd, offensive, and malevolent rumours were in circulation, that he deemed it his duty to speak to his friend, and earnestly to implore him to deprive the calumniations of even the semblance of truth.

Taundorf had been of late a continual rover. Hans waited for an opportunity, watched his departure, and followed him into a wood, one of his favourite haunts. When he came upon him, Taundorf was sitting on a high stone, less admiring the charming prospect than sunk in deep contemplation.

"What, have you become an anchorite?" asked Hans, addressing him. "You are getting as lean as a Carthusian. Night and day in woods and ravines, lost in the thickest fogs, and preaching to heaven and earth. You are wearing yourself down to a skeleton. Come, man, get to your senses again. Heaven knows I am anxious enough about you and your soul's salvation, and I am sick at hearing all that people say against you."

"Ay!" answered Taundorf, still sitting quietly upon the stone. "The world says, I believe, that the devil has already claimed me."

"And are you surprised at it? Don't you look like a mole that has had nothing to eat for nine months? It's a shame for a man like you to go about so, sighing and groaning, as if you were going to be hanged. No, Taundorf, it isn't hanging matter yet. I have passion weeks of conscience myself, and know how hard it goes with the spirits at such times; still, rouse yourself like a man, and the weight will drop from your shoulder. Try my remedy for once. Go to the altar like a child—depend upon me you'll grow easy and happy, and the desire of life shall mount and trill in you like a lark flying up to heaven in spring."

"I can imagine it!" replied Taundorf, slowly descending from the rock, and seating himself at the foot of it, by the side of his friend, upon soft and fragrant moss.

"The creation itself," he continued, "would be an easier labour

than the perfect justification of one's own soul to a cruel and—in spite of its religion and its faith—an *unbelieving* world. Because I know that to undertake such a task is to pour water through a sieve, I do not attempt it. Leave to the multitude their choicest pleasures. Let them chatter, gossip, and suspect until a fresh impulse draws them off. For you, dear Hans," he continued, solemnly and touchingly, "you should be wiser than to suppose that either death or devil can give me fear, — albeit the first may easily overtake me, seeing I am mortal!"

"Well, but who wants to speak of death?" said Hans. "I can't think how it is you like to dwell on all the bilious thoughts that you get into your head. Death, death,—there's nothing but death. How many spectres have you in your eye now?"

"Only one," answered Taundorf, mildly, "and he sits close by me."

Braunholz jumped up as though he had been shot.

"Come, come," said he, turning as white as a ghost, and trembling in every joint, "that won't do, friend Taundorf. I like jokes very well in their way, but, considering what you profess to be, this is any thing but agreeable. I am not afraid—far from it—but really—there is a time for all things, and—and—bless my soul, what a sultry air there is abroad to day!"

"Be not alarmed, good Hans," replied the clockmaker: "this vision touches me alone."

"You?"

"Yes, me! Hans, listen to me. For one fortnight has death accompanied my every step. He sits next to me at the bench; he is with me when I wind up the clocks, when I turn, or melt; like me, he gathers flowers and herbs. So faithful a comrade is he, that his friendship will outlast my life. Oh!" continued the seer, shuddering as he spoke, "the thing is terrible, even to a man free from all prejudice!"

Hans made no reply to this confession. The two friends rose in silence, and proceeded on their way home. Upon the road Taundorf gave a more particular account of the mode in which the apparition had presented itself.

"About a fortnight ago," said he, "business took me to Bohemia. The day was overcast, yet particularly refreshing. Nature, as you are aware, ever attunes me to rejoicing, and I walked abroad with the long-since-forgotten elasticity of youth. I went on, after my own manner, through thick and thin, and reached my destination in the cheerfulest of moods. My business was soon dispatched, and, as gleefully, I started on my return. Once, during my solitary progress, I turned—I know not why—suddenly round, and just where a thinning of the forest formed a frame to a charming prospect, I beheld the outline of a shadow. It was standing perfectly still—at a distance of perhaps ten paces—and it was of the shape and size of a man. At first I believed it to be my own shadow; but the sun was not shining, nor did the thing obey any one of my movements. On the contrary, when I advanced it retreated. In other respects the form was so dim and indistinct, that it might have been mistaken for a grey vapoury

pillar. The strange proceedings of the apparition occupied my whole attention. Sometimes it crept close by me. Then it was lost, but afterwards came back again, more sharply defined, and assuming more and more the shape of a human being. Thus accompanied, I reached home. I watched the shadow at the door. The vapoury figure did not enter, but timidly remained at the threshold, gazing after me with a lowering eye. Every doubt was gone. I had seen Death this time, aiming at myself. The manner of his appearing, however, gave me reason to hope for a couple of months' life yet. Until the threshold is crossed one is still free. Yesterday was the fatal day which the spectre chose for his visit. He crawled into my room, and now the hideous figure, visible to none but me, is scarcely a yard distant. Oh, how palpable and plain! His look is gentle, not sullen; but it is never withdrawn. I am tortured by it, Hans. It counts every moment of my life, and is so eager to bed with me in the grave. Do not think that the journey terrifies me. It is the presence of the escort that weighs me down. Why should I fear death itself? I have lived as duty and conscience have commanded me, as every one of us is bound to do."

"Humph!" ejaculated Hans.

"You doubt it, Braunholz?"

"I have no business to do so," replied Hans. "Let the church question and decide such solemn matters, not a poor sinful worm, like me. I love you, Taundorf, and I can't find fault with you, even when I would. Tell me, what will you do if this death-spectre doesn't leave you?"

"Superfluous question!" Have you forgotten what happened here?" Taundorf pointed to the house of Dahlmann, which they passed at the moment.

"One thing I would ask you, Hans, before we part to-night. We are old friends." Braunholz took the hand of the clockmaker, and pressed it warmly. "Do not desert my Anna!" proceeded Taundorf. He said no more, and Hans made no reply; but he pressed the hand which he held more fervently than ever, and tears spoke all that his faithful heart could suggest.

"Grant me understanding enough, good Heaven!" said the honest Hans, as he walked home alone that night, "to set up a boundary line to my meditations at the proper time. There is much on earth to shake one's reason, if it be not firmly seated. Cautious, cautious, Hans, if you would not add one idiot more to the public madhouse!"

The whole frame of Taundorf gradually gave way. He persisted in living in the open air, and yet his strength forsook him. The figure of death, invisible to every creature but himself, clung closer and closer to him. It did not quit him for an instant. By day it was a shadow; by night a figure enveloped in clear bright garments. During the last week of his life the seer came into actual contact with it. He felt its proximity, and he averred that he should depart the very instant that death was, as it were, *lost* in him.

At length the fated man was unable to leave his room. The pious and the good crowded around his door and besought him to pray and

to implore the blessings of the Christian Church. One intreated him to receive the Holy Sacrament, assuring him that the visible angel of death, who was Satan in disguise, could only be driven away by such religious means. If he refused, Satan would assuredly snap his soul up, as greedily as a carp a crumb of bread. Taundorf listened with admirable patience to his holy counsellors. At length the throng became intolerable : he caused the door to be closed, and he remained alone with Braunholz and Anna. He spoke cheerfully, and with perfect consciousness. He reviewed his past life with calmness and pleasure. Nature was the enchantment upon which his innermost soul hung.

"With sundown," said he, "death will be absorbed in me. Open the window, that I may once more see the evening sky, and feast my eyes upon the splendour which the declining sun pours over field and mountain."

Anna complied with her father's wish. Braunholz was at the bedside, watching the departing minutes upon the face of the old pinchbeck watch.

"Do you see the sun?" inquired Hans, of the sinking man.

"A little, very little," answered Taundorf. "But I am rejoiced to prove to you that my pinchbeck faith has been as good—as—the other—golden——"

Taundorf turned his face towards the day. The last ray of the setting sun overspread it with a bright light.—The seer was dead!

"Angels have stood at his bedside," exclaimed Hans, closing the eyes of his departed friend; "angels, and no fiend, if that sweet smile may be trusted."

A close inquiry, on the part of the clergy, was made into all the circumstances connected with the death of Taundorf; but as nothing extraordinary had attended it, the deceased was allowed to have an undisturbed funeral, without ringing of bells, as he himself had desired.

His death remained for a long time the subject of conversation and curious conjecture. His loss was regretted by all; for he was esteemed at least a singularly wise and honourable man. The wondrous faculty of deathseeing did not cease with the death of Taundorf, although it is allowed that none of his successors possessed it in such perfection; certainly, few could unite so many and such useful talents. The belief is not yet dead, although few confess their faith in an age in which scepticism has learned to mock and ridicule the solemnities of superstition.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS OF GIDEON SHADDOE, ESQ.

No. VI.

" 'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."
Lochiel's Warning.

Not

"Coming events cast their shadows before them,"

as it pleased the printer of the catalogue of the works in the late exhibition of the Royal Academy to mar the line in setting it up as a motto to Edwin Landseer's brilliant moonlit picture.* Rare Edwin! He beats them all, Hondius, Snyders, aye, even Rubens himself in this walk—and why? Because he has a soul behind his brush; because, to say nothing of his execution, he is a poet; witness his "Poor hunted Hart" of the last year, and a hundred other immortalities. That Bay Horse of his with the caged blackbird striving to outsing the clink of the slip-shod smith's hammer will go down to posterity with Paul Potter's Bull.† The horse is positive reality, and so is Lance's Carp, in his picture of "Life and Death," which shone over the chimney-piece of the British Institution in Pall Mall, this spring. In the higher departments we have men who, especially for colour and composition, may challenge competition with any of their Continental rivals. And yet, at Munich, they have represented the Genius of British Art asleep at the bottom of something which is probably meant for a ladder: this, be it remembered, with Wilkie's "Reading the Will"‡ before their eyes. Modest Germans!

"But you are wandering, Mr. Shaddoe."

"Very true, madam—your pardon—my pen ran away with me—to return, then :—"

"Coming events cast their shadows before—"

and previously to entering upon this branch of our subject, it may not be uninteresting to introduce to our friends an old tradition relative

* The printing of this catalogue should be more attended to. The instance above given is not the only one of such absurd alteration of the words quoted as would justify the introduction of "Mangling done here" on its title page.

† "Shoeing." No. 332. Catalogue, 1844.

‡ Bought by the King of Bavaria for 400 guineas. When will his wide-awake subjects produce such a work as that?

to the origin of the name of "Lochiel," whose chief so bravely disdains the warning of the seer in Campbell's exquisite poem.

The first man who distinguished the name of Cameron was renowned for his feats of arms and prodigious strength. There was said to be a stone near the family seat of at least 5 cwt. which he could lift with one hand, and toss with almost as much ease as if it had been a football. A ploughshare was no more than a twig in his grasp, and was twisted by him with as much ease as ordinary men twist a hazel rod. Ropes of hemp could no more bind him effectually than they bound Sampson. Endowed with this overpowering force, it is not to be wondered at that he was rather partial to the law of the strong hand; and he accordingly challenged all the mighty men of his time to single combat, in which he was always victorious, but not without occasional mishaps. In one of these encounters he so far "got his paiks" that his nose was driven on one side; whence he was named "Cameron," or "Wry-Nose."

The ancient custom of thus distinguishing persons by any personal singularity, whether a beauty or a blemish, was common to the Highlanders as well as the Romans. If the latter could boast of their "Cicero" and "Strabo," the former had their "John the Fair," "James the Crooked," "Willie the Blind," &c. The memory of this habit is rendered imperishable by Sir Walter in Roderick Dhu, or Roderick the Black. Our Scotch Hercules went by the name of "Hugh with the Wry-Nose." His son not being remarkable for any particular bodily beauty or deformity, the use of patronymics, even then in full vigour, came into play, and he was called "Charles, Son of Wry-Nose," or Cameron, the family name adopted by all his successors.

Hugh Cameron is said to have come originally from Dumbartonshire to that part of the country where Lochiel's estate lay at the time of the rebellion in the forty-five, as a thriving wooer of M'Tavish of Strahorgig, or some such euphonious name. His wooing, backed by his personal powers and prowess, was not long a-doing; and he won the lady with the full consent of herself and friends. But his estate? Aye, there was the rub; he was to get that by his own valour:—so he looked out for a good promising dispute.

The story goes that a part of the estate of M'Donald of Glengary lay contiguous to that of his father-in-law, and with him Hugh soon contrived to pick a quarrel. To it the M'Tavishes and M'Donalds went nothing loth. Hugh, confident in his strength, urged the decision of the affair by a duel; but Glengary (whose clan was superior in number to M'Tavish's), although a man of undaunted courage, was too wise to enter the lists with the certainty of failure. The usual consequences of a deadly feud followed. Bloody skirmishes in which, at a great expense of men, the more numerous M'Donalds were generally victorious, led to no definitive results; and Hugh, after a struggle of many years, found himself as far from the conquest of an estate as ever, with this comfortable addition, to wit, that the M'Tavishes, who had come off second best, and whom he had considerably weakened by the copious bleedings that they had undergone in the

attempt, began to look upon him with something worse than indifference.

Cold looks and cold shoulders will tell upon the firmest nerves; and poor Hugh, to divert his melancholy, went to visit his relations in Dumbartonshire. He was so altered in temper and appearance that his friends became alarmed; none more so than his old foster-mother, who loved him with the affection of a Scotch nurse, an affection often more ardent than that of the parents themselves.

Now Hugh Cameron's nurse had obtained the reputation of being "no cannie:" in plain English, she was said to be a witch and very particularly intimate with Satan, with whom she had danced to the tunes of "Kilt thy coat Maggie and come this way wi' me," and "Hulie the bed will fa'," played by his infernal majesty's own piper. So great a favourite was she, that the fiend even humbled himself like a footboy to do her errands; and his services she frankly offered to her pining foster-son. Hugh began by being shocked and sending his nurse in the first transports of his wrathful speech and just indignation to the dominions of the gentleman in black whom she proposed as his deliverer from his troubles, but, tired out by her importunity, ended at last by giving his consent to take her advice. She immediately promised the fulfilment of his wishes.

"Return," said she, "immediately to your father-in-law. Depend no more on your prowess for obtaining an estate: trust to me for compassing your ends. Take these *Iels*"—holding out a bundle of leathern thongs—"now, listen. Catch a fox alive on your father-in-law's estate. Tie these thongs to his tail so that they trail upon the ground. Loose him and let him go. All the land which that fox shall run over and surround with the thongs shall be converted into the same nature with the ground which the thongs shall last touch on your father-in-law's estate, and shall belong to you and your heirs for ever."

Cameron took the thongs and returned determined to go the whole animal. That he might have a good as well as large estate, he decided upon letting the fox loose upon a fine meadow belonging to his father-in-law just bordering upon the property of Glengary, thinking not only to gain the promised land, but to have it all one fertile field.

The fox was accordingly brought to the meadow. The incantations directed by the nurse were carefully pronounced, and the prescribed charms and ceremonies duly performed. The fox was then unbagged with his train of thongs, and to make him travel the faster and further, Hugh set the dogs upon him.

The lawyers have a wise horror of making a case too good. The nurse had said nothing about dogs, and the fox, eager to escape from them, ran at once into the little brook that meandered through the meadow where he was set at liberty. The dogs were at fault, and Reynard crept along the embowered channel till he came to Glengary's estate, when off he went at the top of his speed. Then the charm instantly operated. Water being the last thing that the enchanted thongs had touched on M'Tavish's estate, as fast as the fo:

ran, water overflowed the whole country. At their touch, field and furrow, copse and heath subsided; and the frantic fox, finding the waters gaining on him, fled farther and faster, till in a few hours the whole valley was one continued loch. Picture to yourself the M'Donalds under this visitation. As the unnatural inundation rose higher and higher, they were at their wits' end. Those who were so fortunate as to find time for escape took refuge in the mountains, and left the peaceful enjoyment of the lake and adjacent hills to Hugh Cameron and his followers. The lake was called "Lochiel," or the Lake of Thongs; and from that loch does the chief of the Camerons take his title.

A country where such traditions could pass current, and in which more unfortunate creatures, perhaps, passed to death through the torturing fire for the imaginary crime of witchcraft under laws framed and administered in the spirit of Moloch himself, than suffered on the same accursed account in any region of similar extent, was a soil well calculated to cherish the *Taghairm* and *Second Sight*. Both had their origin in the craving of men to penetrate the veil that obscures the future; and both, but especially the latter, may be adduced as evidence of the belief in that duality of mind the existence of which has been admitted by philosophers in most ages, and which was accepted as a necessary ingredient in prognostication and divination.

Of the *Taghairm*, which is said, literally, to signify "an echo," and of which such a thrilling description is given in the fourth canto of "The Lady of the Lake," traces may be found in antiquity. Those who slept on the skin of the sacrificial ram at the temple of Amphiaraus*, expectant of visions, were, in truth, trying the augury of the *Taghairm*; and Latinus is described in the seventh book of the *Æneid* as receiving the oracular warning of Faunus not to marry Lavinia to a Latin, on a couch made of the skins of a hundred immolated sheep; following the example of the priest who sought his responses in the silence of night on a similar bed prepared near the sacred fountain. Divination thus obtained seems to have depended on the notion of the soul of brutes and their instincts —

"Igneus est ollis vigor et cœlestis origo—"

as well as on that of the mental duality of man.

Sir Walter does not seem to have indulged in much poetical licence in describing the harrowing visitations that awaited him who dared the result of the *Taghairm*; for a native of the Isle of Lewis told the minister of North Uist, that, having passed the night in a hide, he felt and heard such terrible things that he could not describe them. Something very like this appears to have formerly prevailed in Ireland, where divination was sought by sleeping on *tumuli*; and where, a sheep having been sacrificed for the recovery of his health, the patient was clothed in its skin.

Traces of the *Deuteroscopia*, or *Second Sight*, may be found among

* At Oropus in Attica.

the Scandinavians; but Scotland was its stronghold and the place of its full development. Old and young, male and female, possessed it. It was both hereditary and capable of acquisition. The seer sometimes found himself endowed with the faculty without the least consciousness of the time or mode of its arrival; but it might be also imparted from a gifted person by the pressure of the seer's right foot, when the vision was present, on the left foot of the novice, the seer holding his hand on the neophyte's head, and directing him to look over his tutor's right shoulder. A transient view of the vision might, it was believed, be imparted even by the pressure of the beholder's foot on that of a bystander.

But a more awful noviciate was the lot of some of those who aspired to the possession of second sight by tuition. A rope of hair which had bound a corpse to a bier was coiled like a serpent round the body of the pupil. Thus accoutred he was directed to gaze through a hole made by removing a fir knot, and to look back between his legs till the company of an advancing funeral should cross the march of two conterminous proprietors. This initiation, though somewhat ludicrous as well as appalling, was believed to be not without peril; for if the wind changed whilst the disciple was girt by the deadly rope, his life was held to be in danger. The fairies, too, were supposed to have the power of imparting the gift, as appears from the trial of Isobell Sinclair in 1633.

Much must have depended on the organization of the eye; for the vision only endured so long as the seer could keep his eyes steadily open: if he winked, he could only see it by glances. The seer's sad spirit, therefore, could hardly descend with any effect on weak-eyed persons, or Albinos.

The faculty of second sight he lost by a change of place or circumstances. The well-known line

"Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt,"

did not apply to those who were endowed with this painful gift; for many of the Scotch Highlanders and Islanders, who had the second sight, ceased to see visions when they bade their native land good night and migrated to the West Indies. A mere visit to the capital—though great cities are very unfriendly to ghosts and spiritual appearances—was not sufficient to dissipate the endowment, according to Woodrow, who relates that the Provost of Glasgow was standing at the cross of Edinburgh with a Highland gentleman, when the Highlander looking on one who passed, told his companion that the passenger would very soon be a dead corpse. Only a few minutes elapsed before the unfortunate man was accidentally killed by a carriage and borne away in their presence.

But although the genuine second sight was lost by the Scotch seer who left the land of his sires for foreign countries, the predictive dream might still be retained. Thus Monro related to his lieutenant-colonel at the storming of Stralsund in 1628, "a vision that was seene by a souldier of the colonell's company that morning, before the enemy did storme, being a predictive dreame, and a true. One

Murdo Mac-claude (Macleod), borne in Assen (Assint), a souldier of tall stature and valiant courage, being sleeping on his watch, awakened by the break of day, and jogges two of his comrades lying by him, who did find much fault with him for sturring of them. He replied, 'Before long you shall be otherwise sturred.' A souldier called Allen Tough, a Loghabar man, recommending his soul to God, asked him what he had seene, who answered, 'You shall never see your country againe.' The other replied, the loss was but small, if the rest of the company were well. He answered, 'No, for there was great hurt and dearth of many very neare.' The other asked againe, whom he had seen more that would die besides him. Sundry of his comrades he tould by name that should be killed. The other asked what would become of himself. He answered, 'he would be killed with the rest.' In effect, he describeth the whole officers, by their cloathes, that should be hurt. A pretty quicke boy near by, asked him, 'what would become of the major,' meaning me. He answered, 'he would be shot, but not deadly,' and that the boy should be next to me when I were hurt, as he was."*

The second sight does not appear to have been retrospective; the vision generally related to something that was presently happening or soon to come to pass. The seer saw not those who had been struck by death; the dying, or those who were soon to die were, most frequently, the objects represented. For, although happy events were not entirely excluded, the scenes, for the most part, were melancholy and boded woe. The doomed object generally appeared to the *Taishatr* under some dismal aspect incompatible with life: often in a shroud, or, as in the impressive scene in Waverley where the aged Highlander checks Callum Beg as he is about to fire upon Colonel Gardiner — "Spure your shot — his hour is not yet come. But let him beware of to-morrow — I see his winding sheet high upon his breast." Woodrow states that previous to the departure of the Marquis of Argyle for London in 1660, that nobleman was "playing at the bullets" with some gentlemen of the country, when one of them, as the Marquis stooped to lift the bullet, turned pale and said to those about him that he saw the Marquis with his head off and his shoulder full of blood.† The same author also mentions the arrival of a gentleman among a company in the county of Angus, and that on his entrance, one of the party who knew him not, "turned very dampish and dull." Soon after the gentleman went out, on which he upon whose spirits his appearance had produced such an effect showed great concern, and expressed his wish that the gentleman would stay, for he saw him with a shroud up to his neck, a sure sign of death. Some of the company, struck by the earnestness of the seer, went

* Expedition with Mackaye's Regiment. This must be the story alluded to by Dalgetty in the "Legend of Montrose."

† The Marquis of Argyle was beheaded for his compliance with the usurpation, a crime, as Hume justly observes, common to him with the whole nation, and such a one as the most loyal and affectionate subject might frequently by violence be obliged to commit. The disgraceful excuse for this cruel injustice was, that some examples were necessary after such a bloody and triumphant rebellion.

after the gentleman and in vain besought him to stay. He rode off, "and in the way his horse and he fell, and he broke his neck and dyed." The date of this last occurrence is a year or two previous to 1726.

But in its strictest sense the second sight is a discovery of events actually passing. As when Mr. John Cameron, minister at Lochend in Kintyre, on the morning of the battle of Bothwell Bridge, was found by Mr. Morison, one of his elders, weeping and wringing his hands, and exclaiming—"Our friends at Bothwell are gone." When Morison endeavoured to persuade him that it might be a mistake or a fit of melancholy—"Nae, nae," says he,— "I see them flying as clearly as I see the wall,"—and this, as nearly as they could calculate, happened at the Loch-head of Kintyre, at the very minute the Covenanters fled.

On the other hand, Mr. Michael Bruce, another Scottish clergyman, is recorded to have seen in second sight the fall of "Great Dundee," on the day of the battle of Killiecrankie. He preached on that day at Anworth, and in his usual conversational style in the preface to his prayer, he said :—"Some of you will say, what neuse, minister? What neuse about Clavers, who has done so much mischief in this country? That man sets up to be a young Montrose; but as the Lord liveth he shall be cutt short this day. Be not affrayed, I see them scattered and flying: and as the Lord liveth and sends this message by me, Claverhouse shall no longer be a terrour to God's people. This day I see him killed—lying a corps,"—and that very day, about the same time, he *was* killed.

Nearly akin to this were the exclamation of Cornelius of Padua on the day of the battle of Pharsalia—"Cæsar has conquered,"—and the scene enacted by Apollonius Thyanæus at Ephesus on the day of the slaughter of Domitian at Rome by his freedman Stephanus. Ascending an eminence, Apollonius shouted before the people—"Well done, Stephanus,—well done! Strike the murderer.—Thou hast struck,—he is wounded,—he is slain."

This fatal gift of second sight seems to have been no enviable possession.* Shrieks, tremors, and perspirations as if the seer were subjected to invisible violence frequently accompanied the spectral impressions. To some it became intolerable, and indeed, notwithstanding the exceptions in the cases of the ministers above noticed, it was generally held to be a Satanic endowment. But he who once came under its influence could not shake it off by mere volition. Religious aid was necessary to free the seer from his sinful bonds. Many applied to the presbytery, and, kneeling in the parish church, prayed to be delivered from their distressing gift with contrite hearts, earnestly desiring the supplication of the minister. Those who thus acted and were truly penitent were said never more to be troubled with the second sight.

In Scotland these visions have long almost entirely faded away be-

* Sir Walter Scott has admirably described its appalling effects. "Allan M'Aulay" in the Legend of Montrose, and "Moy" in Glenfinlas, will occur to every one.

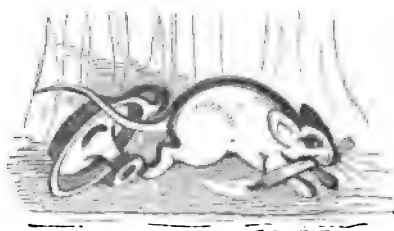
fore the advance of science and true religion; but a belief in something closely allied to them still lingers in Wales. Even in Glamorgan-shire the church bell is still said to ring out its prophetic death-note without the aid of mortal hand,—sheeted spectres continue to rise before the belated traveller near some ancient house, bridge, or mill, formerly the scene of deeds of darkness,—corpse-candles glimmer blue through the gloom, as they mark the path of the future funeral, and

“ The mountain mist takes form and limb
Of noontide hag and goblin grim.”

It is more particularly in the remote parish churches that the affecting custom of decorating the graves with flowers prevails. Some of these sequestered spots are most beautifully situated; and in a quiet sunny spring day speak to the heart more penetratingly than the finest monumental marble.

In one of these, on a hill side commanding a lovely view of wooded declivity and rich valley watered by a brilliantly clear stream, the very old graves whose tenants had long since mouldered into dust and whose families had completely died out, presented a mass of rank herbage and vigorous weeds, choking the remains of flowering shrubs planted by the hand of affection long, long ago. The more recent resting-places were blooming parterres kept carefully weeded, and, in some, choice plants were intertwined into living garlands at the head and feet. The old gray church, with its two bells peeping out from its ivy-clad belfry and its modest cross on the simple gable, rose from the green and flower-enamelled graveyard. The sun shone sweetly from the clear blue sky in which a lark was carolling: all else was repose. One little grave struck me particularly. It was neatly fenced and lay in a nook sheltered by the church, whose shadow seemed to curtain it from the noontide sun, whilst it was left open to the rays and dews of morning and evening. No earth was to be seen, nor any garden flower; but the turf was the softest and freshest ever beheld, and was starred all over with daisies, primroses, and violets. Here slept a child whose parents had gazed with fond delight on its bright eyes and locks. Love and death had both passed that way.

It was while on a visit in this neighbourhood that some instances of local apparitions were related to me, and which those who see the New Year and this Magazine may read, if such be their pleasure.



INCENDIARISM FROM HUNGER.

OUR FAMILY :

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PARISH BOARD.

It was a sad journey, though a short one, for my Father, from his home to the Workhouse. At every step he was painfully reminded of his position. In return for the ready smile and friendly greeting for every body he met, he received only cold looks, and sullen or fierce replies. The very children, with whom he had been so popular, shrank from him inspired by the common prejudice : little heads, that used to nod to him, were immovable on their shoulders ; little faces, that used to brighten at his approach, were frowning their aversion ; not a few of the youngsters ran indoors as from the minister of a new Herod. And yet so innocent was he of the revolting act attributed to him, that he had yet to learn particulars which were known to almost every man, woman, and child in the place — that the grave of the little Hobbes had been re-opened ; the removed earth being placed, as the practice was in such operations, in a sheet, so that the mould might all be returned to its place without leaving a vestige to tell the tale of disturbance ; but the resurrectionists had been alarmed at their work, and had decamped with the corpse, leaving the clay in the sheet, at one side of the yawning void, and the shattered coffin on the other.

To add to his discomfort, when my Father arrived at the Workhouse, a number of applicants for out-door relief were in waiting at the gate ; a squalid group, including the ungrateful Mrs. Hopkins, the bitter Mrs. Pegge, with her green shade, and the old deaf cripple, with her crutch and her ear-trumpet. As several of these persons were his patients, he inquired as usual after their complaints ; but his questions were met by a dogged silence, or rude answers ; whilst the three shrews were loud in their revilings, the deaf woman screaming high above the rest.

" Yes, ax 'em, do, poor things ! when they mean to go to the pit-hole. And much rest they'll get in it, — just earthed over at night, and dug out again afore morning ; that's all we enjoy of our narrow homes ! Well, you've snatched one at any rate — poor Sukey Hobbes ! Aye, you may shake your head — you didn't do it, — not you, — nor she isn't you know where, with her bones surgically picked into a skeleton, to stand behind a green curtain in a glass case. But, mark my words, — she'll harnt ye some day ! She'll harnt ye in her little shroud !"

My Father rang the bell : the sliding pannel in the gate moved aside ; and a hard red face looked through the grating ; but the porter

still delayed to withdraw the bolt. He was an officer whose duty it was to admit rags and tatters, and as a character was being torn to shreds outside, he resolved to afford time for the operation. So the vituperation went on.

"Yes, go in to the Board, and hush and huddle it up among ye ! It was not body-snatching—oh no—poor paupers have not bodies, but only carcasses like brute beasts, so it wasn't body-snatching at all ! And if it was, who cares for the remains of the like of us ? If we make away with ourselves, we're mangled and mammoked with stakes through our corpses ; and if we die natural, we're cut up like Haggerty and Holloway ! Who did poor Sukey kill that she's to be made a 'natomy ? — But murderers is dissected, and so is paupers !"

The gate here opened ; and my Father entered, bestowing on the porter a gentle rebuke, that was received with a sneer, and revenged by leaving the pannel open, so that as the Doctor crossed the yard he received through the grating a parting salute.

"Take care of John Hobbes, that's all. If *he* comes nigh your body, he'll snatch it alive !"

With these sounds ringing in his ears, my Father entered the Workhouse ; not unmarked by sundry dingy paupers, who were in waiting as messengers, and nodded and winked to each other, but omitted the customary tokens of respect as he passed them in the passage. Not a creature seemed to recognise him, but the master's dog.

My Father, for all his virtues, was not a favourite with the Board. In those days of general prosperity, and under the Old Poor Law, the expenditure for the maintenance of paupers was in many parishes very liberal, in some lavish ; yet there were examples even then of a harsher spirit and sterner system ; and in certain localities, the sole aim of the parochial authorities was to reduce the poor and their rates to the lowest possible pitch. In our own district especially, the management of the Workhouse had gradually fallen into the hands of rigid utilitarians and strict Economists, who were continually seeking to discover that minimum of support on which human life can subsist ; and their rules, by augmenting labour and diminishing food, had already brought their Work Tables and Dining Tables to proportions that would have astonished an upholsterer.

My Father, from natural disposition, was ill-adapted to second such views ; and was, in the opinion of the authorities, an expensive doctor : he was too apt to prescribe wine and a generous diet for very reduced patients ; and to recommend extra comforts in clothing, and improvements in lodging the poor. Moreover, his evidence at inquests on defunct paupers was not always exactly what could have been wished ; and in one case had tended directly to induce a verdict of "Died from Neglect." He was therefore no favourite with the Board, who, as Postle suspected, had secretly encouraged the establishment of a rival doctor, in whose private opinion the milk of human kindness, to say nothing of the cream of it, was a luxury to be reserved for the wealthy classes. With the poor, on the other hand, my Father ought to have been popular : but his good intentions towards them were nullified by orders that were disobeyed, and *recommendations that were disregarded* : he was supposed, by some, to

drink the wine that did not follow his prescription, and when it did, that *he* changed the Port into Elder, and the Sherry into Raisin. Thus he was associated with all sins of omission and commission; and as one of the Parochial Body, shared in the general odium that attached to it. His kind manners indeed, his prompt attendance, tender treatment, and private charity, as far as his very limited means allowed, might have procured an exemption in his favour; but his decided opposition to the local and growing habit of opium taking, by the lower classes, had excited a discontent, sedulously fostered by the opposite practice and secret machinations of Shackle, into a dislike, which the imputed outrage in the churchyard had aggravated to abhorrence. And so—a Martyr Elect—my Father entered the Board-room, and placed himself in one of the vacant seats at its long table.

The senior churchwarden, Mr. Peckover, was in the chair; supported on his right by Mr. Hix, who had lost no time in circulating the story of his visit to the Doctor's surgery, with the discovery of the scraps of French-grey cloth and the silver-washed nails—but ending with a recommendation to bury the matter in their own bosoms. There were present, besides, Mr. Bearcroft the overseer, Mr. Poplitt the assistant overseer, Mr. Tally the vestry clerk, and a few more official gentlemen. The greater part of the business of the meeting had been already disposed of: several tenders had been accepted; a complaint against the Master and Matron, and another against the Porter, had been heard and dismissed; a retrenchment in the Dietary had been agreed to; and the last question, the better punishment of the refractory paupers, was under discussion. Bread-and-water and solitary confinement were soon decided on; and then came a pause. The Boardmen looked at each other, and at the Doctor, and then with one accord at the chairman; who rose, coughed, stammered, and proceeded to lay before them a very disagreeable business—the desecration of the churchyard, the violation of a grave, and the abstraction of a corpse—according to popular rumour—by their own medical officer. The gentlemen would no doubt recollect the remarkable funeral bestowed by one John Hobbes, a pauper on the parish books, on his deceased child, who was interred in an elegant coffin, covered with French-grey cloth, and richly ornamented with silvered nails? It was her grave that had been disturbed; and her body which had been stolen for anatomical purposes. He thought, with his friend on his right, such a slur ought not to rest on the parish and its officers. The Doctor himself, he understood, wished for an immediate enquiry. It would have been more regular, no doubt, to have given notice, but as he was present for the purpose, the Board would perhaps dispense with the form, and hear what he had to say on the subject.”

This course being assented to, my Father rose, promptly yet embarrassed, for the old difficulty of proving a negative reduced his eloquence to little more than an assertion.

“All I can say is, gentlemen, that I am an innocent man. As for any guilty knowledge of this matter, it was only this very morning—within an hour ago—that I knew of any grave being robbed, or any body stolen; my informants being Mr. Hix, there, and Doctor Shackle.”

"Yet it was pretty widely known last night, before your christening supper," observed Mr. Poplitt, who had been one of the uninvited.

"The surer proof of my having nothing to do with it," replied my Father; "that I was behind the whole parish in the information. That I was suspected, nay, condemned, was indeed signified to me, at the family festival just alluded to, in a very marked and painful matter—but it is only recently that I have become aware of the cause of that general desertion. On what grounds the charge is grounded it is impossible to divine; my long practical acquaintance with anatomy, in the schools and hospitals, and my professional knowledge, vouched for by the most eminent surgeons of the day, place me beyond the need of such studies of the human subject; and if I did require any aid from dissection, my principles, publicly avowed, deprecate the exclusive application of the remains of the poor to purposes equally beneficial to the rich."

"That is true," said the Vestry Clerk. "I have heard the Doctor express that sentiment on various occasions."

"No doubt of it," said Mr. Poplitt; "but people's practise don't always square with their professions."

"Well, let me be judged by my practice then," said my Father. "What have I ever done, as a medical man, that such a suspicion should fall on me rather than on any one else?"

"If you mean to glance at Doctor Shackle," said the Chairman, "I myself can speak to his alibi; for he was in close attendance on my wife, who was confined on the night in question."

"I glanced at nobody, Mr. Chairman," replied my Father—"nor have an aim beyond my own exculpation. I repeat, that I knew nothing of the affair till this morning; and if you will send for my assistant, Mr. Postle, he will confirm my statement."

"Mr. Postle!" exclaimed half-a-dozen voices.

"Phoo! Phoo! Doctor," said the Chairman,—"You know better than that! In a little quiet bit of body-snatching for the surgery, assistant and accomplice are synonymous."

"So be it," said my Father. "Postle had certainly quite as much to do with the matter as myself; and I was sound asleep in my own bed. But that rests, too, on domestic, and therefore, I presume, on questionable evidence."

"I think," said Mr. Poplitt, appealing to Mr. Hix, "you told us something about some French-grey cloth and silver-headed nails that were seen in the Doctor's surgery?"

"I did," replied Mr. Hix, looking rather confused; "but on the understanding that the communication was to be suppressed as strictly confidential."

"There is no need of suppression," cried my Father; "the articles were taken from my basket-boy, Catechism Jack, who is weak of intellect, and had childishly adorned himself with them on the morning of the christening."

"A likely story!" mumbled Mr. Hix, in a tone between publishing and smothering the remark.

"And pray, Doctor, how did *your* boy become possessed of the cloth and nails?" inquired Mr. Poplitt.

My Father was silent: he could not form the remotest guess; for he was still ignorant that the coffin had been left above ground by the marauders.

"Why, of course," suggested the Vestry Clerk, "the boy picked up the things in the churchyard——"

"Yes, when he were there delivering their sleeping draughts to the dead folks," said Mr. Bearcroft, the Overseer, with a grim smile. Mr. Hix bestowed an approving nod on the Overseer, and Mr. Poplitt cast a sneer at the Vestry Clerk.

"Perhaps," said a little withered man with a pigtail, an Auditor and Trustee, "we had better send for the lad and examine him?"

"It would be to no purpose!" exclaimed my Father. "The poor creature is so timorous, that, if seriously interrogated, he would recur to his old lapse, and nothing would be got out of him, except that he would be a good boy, and say his Catechism, and not tumble down stairs. However, gentlemen, the suspicion attached to that cloth and those nails extorts from me a confession which nothing else should have induced me to make"—and my Father blushed, as if about to plead guilty to the charge against him.

Now, then, it was coming! Mr. Hix nudged his neighbour, and the Overseer winked across the table at Mr. Poplitt.

"It was I, gentlemen," resumed my Father, in a faltering tone, "who supplied the Hobbesses with the means for that preposterous funeral."

The Boardmen looked at each other, and interchanged signals of various import: brow-raising of wonder, head-shakings of disbelief, and shrugs of doubt.

"If you mean the money chucked in at the Hobbes's door, or window," said Mr. Poplitt, "that gift has generally been attributed to Dr. Shackle."

"Universally so," said Mr. Hix.

"And might be still," replied my Father, "if nothing but common humanity were in question. I trust the Doctor is as capable as I am of feeling for a bereaved father and mother. The deed is only claimed, because it tends directly to contradict the charge that has fallen upon me. Were I capable," and the speaker's eyes filled with tears as he recalled the poor dead child, with her flowers and toys about her, as he had seen through the cottage window—"were I capable of robbing a churchyard, *that* little grave would have been the very last on earth I should have dreamed of violating!"

This speech, emphatically delivered, with the air and tone of the deepest feeling, caused a visible sensation amongst the auditors: several seemed affected, and one or two looked foolish, the only softness of which they were capable; but the impression was transient.

"Why, as to that," said the burly overseer, "if the trick had been clearly done, the father and mother would have been never the wiser, while the purse may be, you considered in the light of purchase-money, like, for the body."

My Father's face flushed, his eyes glistened, his lips quivered, and he was about to start up for some angry explosion, when the vestry clerk laid his hand on his arm, held him down, and rose in his stead.

"Mr. Chairman, allow me to propose that this business be dropped.

There is much more mystery about it than we can hope to unravel except by course of time. As yet, we are all in the dark, and where there is a doubt we are bound to give the benefit of it to the accused, and to suppose him innocent, as in this case I honestly believe he is."

Mr. Hix, Mr. Poplitt, and Mr. Bearcroft, rose together; but the loud voice of the big overseer soon found itself in possession of the air.

"The benefit of the doubt! Aye, that's very well for a legal friction, I should say fiction—but what's to benefit us, the parochial authorities, if we connive at such doings to dead paupers, surrounded as we are by such a vast proportion of live ones, and uncommon audacious and refractory? Their excitement is awful."

"They will easily be pacified," said the vestry clerk. "Post a few handbills with a reward for the discovery of the offender——"

"When we have discovered him gratis!" growled Mr. Bearcroft. "Not a shilling, sir, not a shilling! The parish funds are not to be rewarded away in any such manner. The offender is before us, and his guilt or innocence ought to be established at once."

"By all means!" exclaimed my Father:—"it is for that purpose that I am here,—that every equivocal circumstance may be explained away or contradicted, before I visit another parish patient, or set my foot again in the Infirmary."

"I believe that is the general feeling of the Board," said the Chairman, stooping sideways to receive the communication which Mr. Hix was whispering into his ear. "We will come therefore to the point. Perhaps, Doctor, you can tell us the mark or marks on your family linen?"

My Father started, and stared at what seemed so strangely irrelevant a question; but to a repetition of it, replied that he presumed the marks would be the initials of himself and wife, or G. E. B. with the number.

"And in what colour?"

"Either red or blue—red to the best of my recollection."

The Chairman made a signal to a subordinate official who was in attendance, and delivered his order.

"Budge, produce the sheet to the Board."

Budge immediately proceeded to a cupboard in one corner of the room, and unlocking it, drew forth a large strong sheet, soiled with clay, which he laid on the table, when it was eagerly inspected by the Boardmen,—and alas! there were the fatal signs G. E. B. No. 4., worked with red marking cotton in one corner!

The Vestry Clerk having satisfied himself of the fact by ocular inspection, sank back into his chair, violently striking the Minute Book before him with his open hand.

My Father was petrified!

"In that cloth, gentlemen," said the Chairman, "the earth was deposited, which had been taken out of the grave, with a view to its being all returned to its place. The discovery of the robbery was made by the sexton, who reported it to me, and by my orders brought away the sheet, which has remained in the possession of Budge, under lock and key, ever since."

"A clear case! palpable! undeniable! a clencher! a settler!" resounded from different quarters of the room.

"Doctor," asked the Vestry Clerk, in an aside tone, "do you employ a laundress?"

"No," replied my Father, with a sorrowful shake of the head, for he understood the drift of the question.—"The washing is all done at home."

The Chairman, Mr. Hix, Mr. Bearcroft, and Mr. Poplitt, were busily writing on strips of paper, which they passed across the table to each other. To judge by their looks and signals, the communications were generally approved; and some secret resolution having been passed by a succession of affirmative nods, they bent their eyes on the Doctor. He was gazing on vacancy, as a man gazes who seeks at once to comprehend the past, the present, and the future.

"Yes," he said, speaking half aloud to himself, "that sheet is certainly mine, though how it was obtained for such a purpose is an impenetrable mystery. I cannot pretend to fathom it. Time and Providence some day may clear it up—but now, and from me, an explanation is impossible. Gentlemen!" here he raised his voice; "you MUST think me guilty. The presumption is too strong against me,—the current of circumstances too violent to be stemmed by a simple though solemn denial. Hereafter the dark cloud that is hanging over me may disperse; and its shadow that now blackens me so deeply may pass away. In the mean time there is but one course for me to pursue. I cannot—I feel that I cannot—remain your medical officer any longer. The place is vacant. I will send my formal resignation as soon as I get home."

There was a dead silence of assent: nobody said "stop!—consider—take time!"

My Father rose, and bowed to the Chairman, and the Board, and made a movement to shake hands with the Vestry Clerk, but observing no sign of encouragement, bowed to him too, and hurried out of the room.

The pauper messengers, who had learned the whole business by relays of listeners, made jeering comments as he passed through their lounging place—the Matron, whom he encountered in the passage, read in his face ere she arose from her curtsey, that he was disgraced, skipped aside into her parlour, and shut the door. Only the Master's dog still recognised him with his old salutes, and trotting across the forecourt with him, licked his hand for the last time. The hard red-faced porter, the moment the Doctor emerged from the workhouse, had set the gate as wide open as it would swing; my Father passed through it, and it closed with a loud slam.

Perhaps in the whole course of his days his heart had never felt so heavy as it weighed on his way home. In his progress to the Workhouse, he had been shocked and grieved by the frequent manifestations of dislike, and the sad change he had suffered in the golden opinions of all sorts of people; but on his return, the same tokens were embittered by tormenting reflections of more domestic interest. His prospect in life, within the last hour, had altered materially for the worse; and particularly resembled a natural one that was often

before him — the Fens, on a bad day. The situation of Parish Doctor was attended, indeed, with little direct emolument. The fees were calculated on a scale that only allowed for moderate morbus, reasonable rheumatisms, cheap agues, and very low fevers; and afforded little profit to a conscientious practitioner, who was not content, in treating a sick pauper, to do it very well for the price. But the parochial connection was valuable: and by his secession from the Board, he would lose as patients the churchwardens and overseers, their spouses and children. In short, he saw before him, very distinctly, a Wife, two dear Twins, and a household to support, but no clear prospect of that indispensable requisite,



A LIVELY-HOOD.

CHAPTER XIX.

AMONGST the minor difficulties of our perplexing family affairs, none was more puzzling than the communication of the robbery, or breaking the plate as Kezia called it, to my Mother. She had slept all through the alarm of the discovery, and had risen, and was about to come down, quite unconscious that Fate, which had mixed up such a black dose for her over night, had prepared another bitter draught for her in the morning. That the revelation would kill her poor mistress stone dead on the spot like a thunderbolt was broadly predicted by the weeping maid-of-all-work. Mrs. Prideaux anticipated that a very hysterical tendency might bring on a succession of fainting fits, and Mr. Postle compared the disclosure to imparting a blow to a packet of fulminating mercury.

At last Uncle Rumbold, in virtue perhaps of his likeness to a philosopher, undertook to deliver the evil tidings, and after some reflection determined to do it at the late breakfast which in my Father's absence he was to enjoy *tête-à-tête* with my mother.

The task nevertheless was a nervous one for an inexperienced bachelor. A dozen times he stopped short in his meal, and clutching his beard in his hand—a trick he had in any case of perplexity—fixed his large speculative eyes on the face before him, asking himself will she scream? or go off in a fit? will her tea go the wrong way?

will she choke with her muffin? or jump up and knock over the teacup? If she did not wear ligatures, thought he, I would not mind; but a woman wears so many bands and ties and laces, that when nature attempts a gallop in her veins she bursts a blood-vessel.

All this while he was eating an egg, out of which, all at once plucking the spoon he held it up, in a line with my Mother's nose, and very solemnly exclaimed,

"Egad! my little fellow, it is well you did not go too!"

This opening however was a failure; my Mother thought that the spoon had merely escaped being swallowed with one of those very large mouthfuls of food which her brother was in the habit of bolting. He therefore tried another tack; and began, in his oratorical tone, as follows:

"In former times, sister, there was a certain sect of philosophers who professed to endure the severest pain with the most perfect indifference."

"Yes," said my Mother, "they swallowed melted lead, and washed their hands in boiling oil, and carried about red-hot poker by the red ends, and allowed any of the company to satisfy themselves that the things were actually burning and scalding hot."

"I alluded to the Stoics," said Uncle Rumbold.

"And so did I," said my Mother.

"Humph!" said Uncle Rumbold. "However, that was the Stoic doctrine; and the young Spartans were brought up in its principles. You remember the story of the Spartan boy who had a stolen fox under his cloak, and allowed the animal to gnaw away his bowels, rather than betray himself by crying out?"

"Ah! I see," said my mother, closing her eyes, and shuddering. "You want your two Nevies to be brought up like young Stoics and Spartans — but what I call hardened little wretches."

"I was not thinking of my Nephews at all," replied Uncle Rumbold. "In referring to the Stoic philosophy, what I wanted, sister, was to incite you to summon up your own fortitude."

"Then why did you not say so at once?" said my Mother. "Is there any thing the matter?"

"Of course there is," replied Uncle Rumbold, "or what occasion would there be for the Spartan virtue? But before you hear it, let me recommend to you to finish your breakfast."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed my Mother, pushing away the tea, and toast, and egg, to which she had helped herself, "as if I could eat, with my heart in my mouth! I do wish you had kept it till George's return. He has ten times more fortitude than I have, — indeed it sometimes amounts to apathy. With his example before me, I might bear up against what might tempt me to stick myself with a breakfast-knife, or to run out and fling myself in the river."

"Well, I will wait," said Uncle Rumbold, "for my brother-in-law's return."

"O no, no, no," cried my Mother; "I must hear it now. If there is one thing I cannot bear, it is suspense. Dear me! What can it be? Is it any thing more about my poor supper party?"

"No," said Uncle Rumbold. "Though the origin of that cut by

the neighbourhood, as I have just learned from Mr. Pestle—or Postle—is an awkward affair too. In short, sister—but you must first solemnly promise me not to shriek, or faint away, or do yourself any mischief, or tip over the urn ——”

“I won’t! I won’t!” reiterated my Mother.

“Well then, the silver plate ——”

“The plate! I knew it was the plate!” exclaimed my Mother, with difficulty suppressing the forbidden scream. But she had not promised any thing about the bell, so she jumped up, and tugged at it till one bell-rope gave way with its blue and yellow rosette, and then she began jerking at the other.

Kezia answered the summons,—pale as a ghost.

“The plate—where’s the plate?”

The maid-of-all-work wrung her hands, and looked piteously at Uncle Rumbold.

“Where’s the plate, I say!”

Poor Kezia dropped on her knees, with a *plump* that would have split any pans but those common brown ones, so hardened by frequent scrubbing, and with uncouth gesticulations referred her mistress to the gentleman with the beard.

“The truth is, sister,” said Uncle Rumbold, “the plate—which was all borrowed I believe—has been fetched away in the night; but whether by the right parties is very doubtful.”

“Thieves!—robbers!” gasped Kezia, in a hoarse whisper.

My Mother had heard enough. Without speaking, she went and threw herself at full length on the horse-hair sofa; whither Kezia, by a mode of progression familiar to housemaids that scour, shuffled after her on her knees. Uncle Rumbold, in the mean time, deliberately drew out his gold watch and gravely laid it on the breakfast cloth before him, determined to allow sorrow exactly five minutes of uninterrupted indulgence before he and comfort interposed.

Such was precisely the position of the parties in the parlour—the door of which Kezia had left open—when my Father quietly entered!

If a domestic man is especially to be pitied, it is when after the rebuffs, conflicts, defeats, disappointments, affronts, losses, and crosses, he has encountered abroad in his business, he returns baffled, tired, disgusted, dejected, to be indemnified by the comforts of home—and finds it desolate—that whilst the reptiles of that foul hag Adversity had been stinging, biting, hissing, and spitting at him in his path out of doors, others of the same malignant brood had been spawning and hatching on the household hearth. That was precisely my Father’s case. He stood wonder and thunder-struck—looking from Uncle Rumbold to Kezia, and from her to my Mother, on the sofa, trying vainly to catch the purport of her broken exclamations.

“Brother-in-law—Kezia—Wife—what is the meaning of this?”

At the sound of his voice, my Mother exchanged her recumbent for a sitting position, and began incoherently to inform him of the catastrophe.

“O George, George—we are ruined at last! We can never

hold up our heads again in the place — never, never, never! What the curate will say—and what Mr. Ruffy may do, for he's a lawyer — and then that horrid Mrs. Spinks —"

"She had hern, ma'am! — she had hern!" cried Kezia — "for she carried it away under her shawl!"

"Thank Heaven for that!" exclaimed my Mother, with extraordinary fervour. "*She* can't ride then on our necks!"

"In the name of common sense," said my Father, appealing to his brother-in-law, "what is all this about?"

"Why, the house has been robbed," answered Uncle Rumbold, "and the plate carried off."

In making this abrupt communication, the Philosopher had reckoned on the cheerful, manly, and generally sanguine disposition of my Father, whom he was surprised therefore to see turn pale and stagger into a seat. But the Doctor's spirits were unusually jaded and depressed by the trial they had so recently undergone, and made him keenly sensible of a loss, which he felt bound to make good; but yet knew to be an impracticable obligation, in the present hopeless posture of his affairs.

"Yes, it really is a heavy trouble, isn't it, George?" said my Mother. "No wonder I felt it deeply, when you take it to heart so seriously. But what is to be done?"

"Oughtn't we to raise the hue and cry, and print handbills, and offer a reward for the stolen plate?"

"Turned into white soup by this time!" said Uncle Rumbold. "Melted down almost into a state of nature. All we can do is to report the robbery to the next magistrate, and leave him and his myrmidons to find the thieves, if they can. As the Doctor is tired, and may be wanted, I will step down myself to his Worship: but before I go, I should like to know, brother-in-law, the upshot of the body-snatching story of which Mr. Pestle or Postle has given me the heads—and the result of your visit to the Board."

"The result is simply," said my Father, "that I am no longer the Parish Doctor."

At this announcement, there was a general expression of surprise, the exclamatory "We an't!" of Kezia ringing high above all.

"But how, George?"

"On what grounds, brother-in-law!"

"To be candid," said my Father, "though some of the members of the Board were less friendly than I expected, they had sufficient grounds, founded on circumstantial evidence, to go upon—that the mould cast out of the poor child's grave was deposited in one of my own sheets."

"One of our own sheets!" screamed my Mother.

"Our sheets!" echoed Kezia.

"Yes; I saw it produced," said my Father. "It was marked G. E. B. No. 4. with red cotton."

The description was no sooner complete, than, after a collision that made our bearded Uncle reel like a classic Bacchanalian, Kezia dashed out of the parlour, and was heard racing up the stairs at a horse-gallop.

"We shall soon know if any of the linen is deficient," said my Mother. "For Kizzy is very careful of it, and that it is worn fairly, turn and turn about."

"I wish she had been more careful of the plate," growled Uncle Rumbold, "instead of trusting to country fastenings—a thin deal shutter, and a strong oaken bar."

"Did the thieves break in, then, at the kitchen window?" asked my Father.

"If they broke in anywhere," muttered Uncle Rumbold, "which his Worship's two-legged ferrets must determine;" and our godfather was setting out on that errand, when he was delayed by the return of Kezia, with the result of her search on her lips and in her face. The household linen was all correct, with the exception of the identical sheet in question, which was missing, though she remembered marking it, as described, with her own hands. Our godfather immediately left the room, and the next minute his bearded profile, surmounted by a very broad-brimmed hat, was seen to pass above the blind of the parlour window.

My Father and Mother, released from the restraint which all persons felt, more or less, in the presence of our strange uncle, immediately became confidential; the first relating what had taken place at the Workhouse, and the last commenting bitterly on a mass of trouble, not spreading itself fairly like a flood on the Flats, but discharging itself, like a terrific waterspout she had lately read of in the county paper, on one devoted house and family.

Kezia, meanwhile, repaired to her old post beside the desk in the surgery, to derive comfort and counsel from Mr. Postle; and was about to reveal to him the mysterious disappearance of the fatal sheet, when she perceived that a very little woman, with a straw-coloured face, was shivering in the patient's chair. The influence of old habits instantly took possession of her.

"Ah! a case for chinchony. My good woman, you've got the ha-gue, and I should say the stertian. You must take bark; and the best form is in canine pills."

"No, no," said the woman; "I'm weary of that old dose. I've took bark enough to turn me into a holler tree. But I'm not come about myself, but my sister, who is troubled about her legs—she has such very coarse veins."

"Has she any occasion to be showing her legs?" inquired Kezia, not a little puzzled by the novelty of the complaint.

"Pshaw! she means varicose veins," said Mr. Postle.

"Yes, so I suppose," said Kezia. "It's very kind of her, I'm sure, to come to us, instead of Doctor Shackle, after all the falsities that has been spread about us, and has gone thro' the parish like an infection of a malignant nature ——"

She was interrupted by the entrance of Uncle Rumbold, who swept through the surgery like a bearded meteor, with the parish constable in his vortex, in which, by an imperative beckon, he involved the maid-of-all-work, who was hurried along with them into the parlour.

"Dear me!" exclaimed my Mother, "what is all this, brother? Who is that strange gentleman with the paper?"

"I am the Constable, ma'am, at your service," said the stranger, referring to the document in his hand; "and this here is a sarch warrant, for sarching the box or boxes of one Kezia Jenks."

"Mine!" faltered Kezia, — who, like many very innocent persons, had nevertheless a most intense dread and awe of the law, and all that belonged to it. "Mine!"

"I do wish, brother-in-law," said my Father, in a tone of the deepest vexation, "I do wish you had been less precipitate! What has this faithful, devoted, hardworking, and affectionate creature done, that she should be affronted by suspicion, and have her character tarnished by such a proceeding? I would pledge my life for her honesty."

"I know you would!" replied Uncle Rumbold, "and therefore acted without consulting you, on my own judgment and responsibility. But I do nothing without grave deliberation; no man does, who wears this—" and he touched his beard. "Listen. In the dead of the night, with my own ears, I heard your paragon of fidelity open her chamber door, and proceed stealthily down stairs, where, by listening over the bannisters, I heard her voice, which I can swear to, in conversation with some person or persons unknown. The words I could not distinguish.—— Silence, woman, and let me proceed——"

But Kezia was not to be silenced; but dropping on her knees, appealed to Heaven, and her master and mistress, to testify to her innocence.

"I was only sleep-walking,—which I have done afore, in this house, and other places besides,—being my misfortune, and such as will kill me, some day, off a parapet, or out of a window—as there is a judge in Heaven, it was only sleep-walking! And I waked up in the kitchen, by stumbling over the cold supper things, with my face on an am."

"A pretty story!" said Uncle Rumbold—echoed by his satellite, the constable.

"But a true one," said my Father. "The poor girl is, to my knowledge, a somnambulist."

"A bamboozleist!" exclaimed Uncle Rumbold. "If you believe in such fables, brother-in-law, I do not—and never will. They're contrary to nature. And the spoons walked off too in their sleep! Bah! Then you will not allow her box to be searched?"

"I will NOT," said my Father.

"In that case," said Uncle Rumbold, "I shall remove my own person and property from the premises."

My Mother looked horror-struck; yet not more so than her housemaid, as deeply interested in the hopes, for the dear twins, that hung on the smiles and frowns of Godfather Rumbold.

"O pray, pray," she sobbed, "don't quarrel and differ about me. I'm not worth it, whatever becomes of me. O Master—consider those dear precious innocent twins. Let my box be searched—I want to have it searched—it will do the things good to give them a fresh-airing!"

"You had better, George," whispered my Mother with a twitch at my Father's sleeve,— "There will be nothing found in it."

"Well—I wash my hands of it!" cried my Father,—and the com-

pany in a body proceeded up-stairs to the attic landing, whither Kezia's box, that she kept in her bed-room, was lugged and ransacked. And never did searcher, legal or fiscal, expose such a heterogeneous medley of articles, of so little intrinsic value! A few clothes—scraps of ribbon, and fragments of patchwork—bits of dried orange and lemon-peel, various ha'penny ballads, and last dying speeches, with one solitary play-bill—a Moore's Almanack, and a Dream-Book—keepsakes innumerable—locks of hair, of all colours, folded up in papers inscribed with female names, and one long silver tress labelled "My dear Muther's,"—with a date,—a red leather heart-pincushion—several double nuts—a reel-in-a-bottle—and a little bone needle-case, in the shape of a closed umbrella, with a paper tied to the handle, "*presented me by Mister Postle*,"—an old-fashioned wooden spice-box, and last, not least, a yellow canvas sampler, with its worked alphabets and numerals, and Adam and Eve and the Apple Tree, and Kezia's own name, and the date at the bottom. On the whole, the impression produced by the exhibition was decidedly in favour of the honesty of the proprietor—that she was disinterested, and affectionate, somewhat superstitious, and had one more grain of romance than was suspected in her homely composition.

"Well, I've sarched many a sarvant's box in my time," said the constable, "and I never come across a more innocenter one than that!"

As the party returned down stairs, they were met at the door of the nursery by Mrs. Prideaux, who, dropping a very lady-like curtsey to Uncle Rumbold, tendered a bunch of keys on a steel ring. She was in that house, she said, a hired nurse, and so far in the capacity of a servant, and therefore begged to submit her boxes to inspection. But Uncle Rumbold as politely declined the offer: he had had quite enough of searching, and had become irksomely indebted in an apology to the maid-of-all-work; for he was a proud man in his way, and of all the things that disagreed with his stomach, none was more indigestible than the proverbial Pasty of Humility,



HUMBLE PIE.

THE SAUSAGE MAKER'S GHOST.

A LONDON LEGEND.

SOMEWHERE in Leather Lane —

I wonder that it was not Mincing,
And for this reason most convincing,
That Mr. Brain

Dealt in those well-minc'd cartridges of meat,
Some people like to eat—
However, all such quibbles overstepping,
In Leather Lane he liv'd; and drove a trade
In porcine sausages, though London-made,
Call'd "Epping."

Right brisk was the demand,
Seldom his goods staid long on hand,
For out of all adjacent courts and lanes,
Young Irish ladies and their swains,
Such soups of girls and broths of boys!
Sought his delicious chains,
Preferr'd to all polonies, saveloys,
And other foreign toys —
The mere chance passengers
Who saw his "sassengers,"
Of sweetness undeniable,
So sleek, so mottled, and so friable,
Stepp'd in, forgetting ev'ry other thought,
And bought.

Meanwhile a constant thumping
Was heard, a sort of subterranean chumping—
Incessant was the noise!
But though he had a foreman and assistant,
With all the tools consistent,
(Besides a wife and two fine chopping boys)

His means were yet not vast enough
 For chopping fast enough
 To meet the call from streets, and lanes, and passages,
 For first-chop "sassages."

However, Mr. Brain
 Was none of those dull men and slow,
 Who, flying bird-like by a railway train,
 Sigh for the heavy mails of long ago ;
 He did not set his face 'gainst innovations
 For rapid operations,
 And therefore in a kind of waking dream
 Listen'd to some hot-water sprite that hinted
 To have his meat chopp'd, as the Times was printed
 By steam !

Accordingly in happy-hour,
 A bran new Engine went to work
 Chopping up pounds on pounds of pork
 With all the energy of Two-Horse-Power,
 And wonderful celerity—
 When lo! when ev'ry thing to hope responded,
 Whether his head was turn'd by his prosperity,
 Whether he had some sly intrigue, in verity,
 The man absconded !

His anxious Wife in vain
 Placarded Leather Lane,
 And all the suburbs with descriptive bills,
 Such as are issued when from homes and tills
 Clerks, dogs, cats, lunatics, and children roam ;
 Besides advertisements in all the journals,
 Or weeklies or diurnals,
 Beginning "LEFT HIS HOME"—
 The sausage-maker, spite of white and black,
 Never came back.

Never, alive!—But on the seventh night,
 Just when the yawning grave its dead releases,
 Filling his bedded Wife with sore affright
 In walk'd his grisly Sprite,
 In fifty thousand pieces !

"O Mary!" so it seem'd
 In hollow melancholy tone to say,
 Whilst thro' its airy shape the moonlight gleam'^c
 With scarcely dimmer ray—
 "O Mary! let your hopes no longer flatter,
 Prepare at once to drink of sorrow's cup,—
 It an't no use to mince the matter—
 The Engine's chopp'd me up!"

THE ECHO.

OUR best thanks are due to a Correspondent who signs himself "Civis." The writer of the Letter in the "Britannia" newspaper, who accused us of favouring incendiarism, evidently did not put forward his true objection to our article. He is probably a wholesale dealer in cheap shirts or embroidered shawls—and a lineal descendant from Mrs. Brownrigge, of atrocious memory.

To "P. R." There was a trial of a labourer for sending a threatening letter, very similar to that of Gifford White, recently reported by Judge Alderson. But the sentence was very different—ten years' transportation.

We must refer "Maria" to her French and English Dictionary for the translation of "La Belle Poule." It seems to mean the bell-pull.

To "N. N." The most characteristic "Mysteries of London" are those which have lately prevailed on the land and the river, attended by collisions of vessels, robberies, assaults, accidents, and other features of Metropolitan interest. If N. N. be ambitious of competing with the writers whom he names, let him try his hand at a genuine, solid, yellow November fog. It is dirty, dangerous, smoky, stinking, obscure, unwholesome, and favourable to vice and violence.

P. W. Too political for us—but might suit the columns of our friend Punch.

A. Too personal. He ought to know better than to send such shells, which are only fit for burial in Woolwich Marshes, to a Magazine.

The Index and Address to the Second Volume will be given with our next Number.

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